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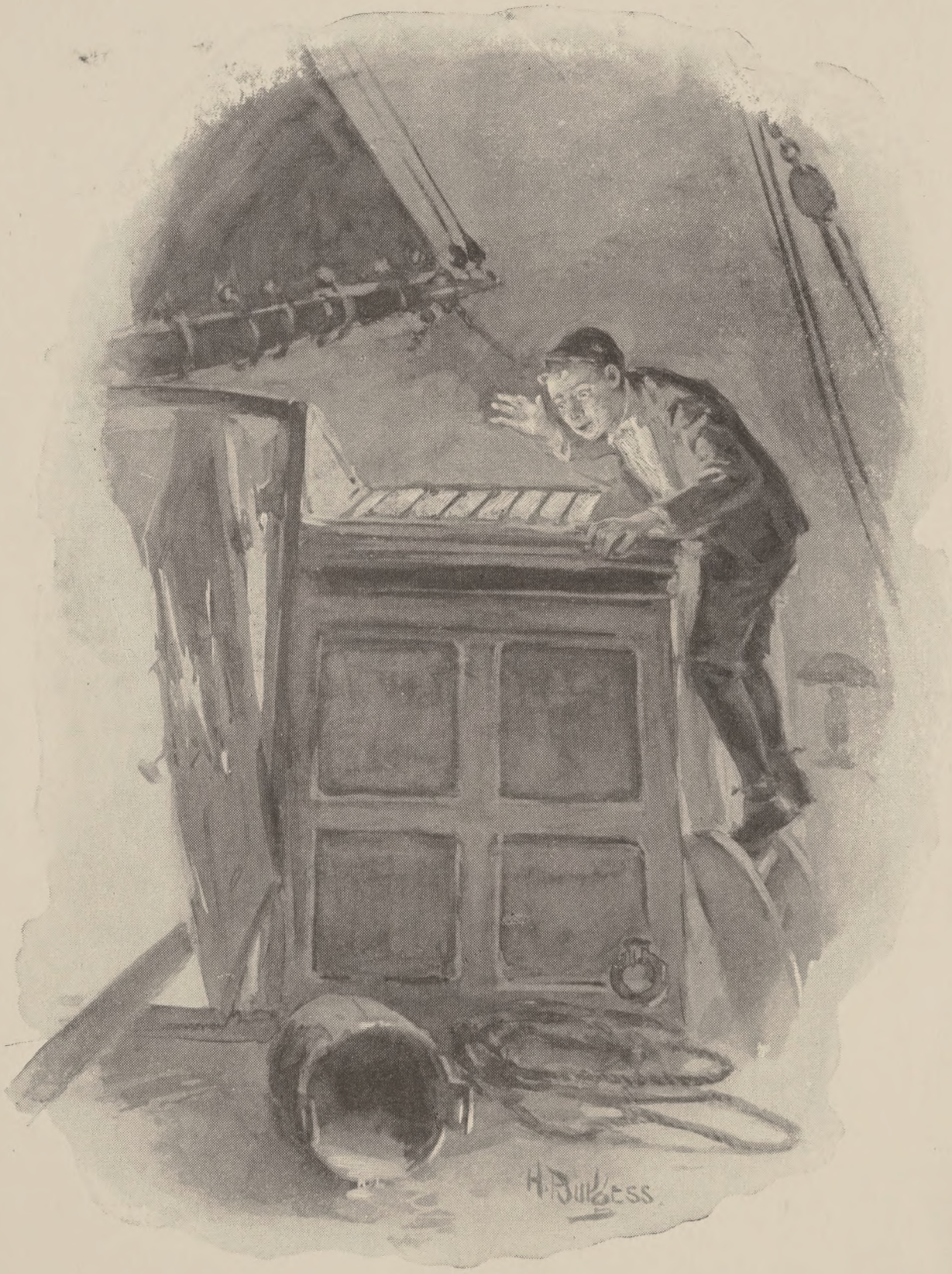

I LOOKED DOWN THE SKYLIGHT UPON THE SCENE.

THE MYSTERIOUS VOYAGE OF THE DAPHNE

And Other Stories for Boys and Girls.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

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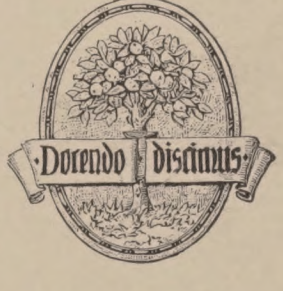

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The Mysterious Voyage of the Daphne.

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THE MYSTERIOUS VOYAGE OF THE DAPHNE.

BY

LIEUT. H. P. WHITMARSH.

THE MYSTERIOUS VOYAGE OF THE DAPHNE.

WHEN I first went to sea it was under rather peculiar circumstances. Instead of shipping in a proper manner with my parents' consent, I was foolish enough to run away, and the result was that my first seafaring experience was a good deal more of an adventure than I expected.

The whole reason of it was because "Old Hobbs" (my schoolmaster) gave me a whacking.

When I look back now I have no doubt that I deserved it, but I did not think so at the time, and, in consequence, I shook the dust of Brooks Academy off my feet and walked into Liverpool.

When I reached the great seaport, after having walked forty miles and spent what little pocket-money I had, I made my way at once down to the docks, where for hours I wandered from one basin to another, gazing in silent admiration at the forest of masts, the great hulls, and the novel sights of the busy quays.

Late in the afternoon I found myself in the great St. George's dock, watching a small iron bark being slowly hauled toward the dock gates. A gang of dockers were pulling her by inches through the basin, the hauling lines plashing in the still black water between every jerk, and as she swung around she showed a stern adorned with much filagree, upon which the name "Daphne" stood out in bold relief.

Little as I knew about ships in those days, I could not help noticing how white her decks were, how trim her spars, and how fresh was her paint. She looked to me like a big, beautiful yacht, about to sail for those wonderful countries that I had read so much about and wished so much to see. To get aboard a ship like this was the height of my ambition.

A group of men standing on the wharf near me were talking about the vessel.

"She's wot I calls a beauty," said one of them. "I would n't mind shipping aboard a packet like that myself."

"Yes, and she's as smart as she looks," said another. "Sails like a witch they say. I should n't wonder if she broke the record to Valparaiso."

So she is bound for Valparaiso, I thought. For

a moment I forgot where Valparaiso was, and then I remembered that, according to the geography, it was the principal seaport of Chili on the west coast of South America — the place where "Old Hobbs" had told us a war was being carried on between Chili and Peru. A voyage in her meant a trip around Cape Horn and all sorts of possibilities. What fun it would be if I could only get aboard her!

Making my way toward the gates, I saw a tall, bearded man walking up and down, shouting orders to the men on the Daphne, which was now hauling close in to the wall, waiting for high tide.

"Slack away on your stern line and haul in on the spring," he sung out. What it all meant I had n't the faintest idea, but I thought it was very grand all the same, and I looked at him with great reverence. When she would have bumped against the pier he yelled: "Stand by with your fenders!" and two or three men ran to the side and threw over some great balls of soft rope, so that she did not even scratch the fine black paint on her side. He seemed as if he were very fond of her, he was so careful and looked at her so admiringly.

Then I jumped to the conclusion that he must be

the captain, and straightway I walked up to him and touched my cap.

"Please, sir, do you want any men on your ship?" I asked timidly.

He looked down at me with a surprised smile as I made the request, and then burst out laughing. "You don't call yourself a man, do you?" he asked.

"No, sir," I replied. "Not yet. But I'm growin' awful fast, sir."

The captain smiled again. "What did you run away for?" he inquired, looking at me sharply.

I wondered how he knew I had run away, and answered him meekly: "Please, sir, Mr. Hobbs whacked me."

"Whacked you, did he? Ha! ha! ha! What for?"

"Shying spitballs, sir."

"Well, why were you doing that?"

"Please, sir, Fatty Johnson was firing at me all the morning, and I wanted to get even with him, and when I tried to hit him, 'Old Hobbs'—Mr. Hobbs, I mean—got in the way and I hit him instead. Right in the eye, sir."

At this the captain put his hands to his sides and

roared. "And so you think you 'd rather go to sea than be whacked, eh?"

"Yes, sir," I said eagerly, "ever so much."

"Well, sonny," said the captain, "I think I'll take you. I want a man about your size for cabin boy, and you can come right along with me to the shipping office."

As I tramped by his side through the streets I felt very proud and wondered what Fatty Johnson and all the other fellows would think if they could only see me.

At the shipping office I signed my name in my best style and was sent down to the ship with the steward, with whom I was to work.

Within an hour or so, the dock gates were opened and the Daphne, with a tugboat ahead of her, was towed out into the Mersey and down the smoky river toward the sea. When we were far enough out the tugboat was let go, and we set all sails with a fair wind for Valparaiso.

And then for two days I had a dreadful time. The Daphne rolled and pitched and banged about as if she were going down every minute, and I lay in my bunk seasick, wishing with all my heart that I was on shore again—even with "Old Hobbs."

I soon got my sea legs on, however, as the weather became finer, and by the time we were a week out I could eat "hard tack" and "salt horse" as well as anyone else. All the men aboard were very good to me, teaching me how to make knots and splice and where to find the ropes. I was taught, too, how to furl a royal, to grease down the masts, to trim lamps, and to steer—all of the things that one must learn before he can be called a sailor.

For crew the Daphne carried twenty-two hands all told. There was the captain, two mates, a cook, a steward, a sailmaker, and a carpenter, fourteen men before the mast, and myself.

The captain, whose name was Wharton, I found to be quite a different sort of man aboard from what he was ashore. He was a stern, strict man, who gave his orders in a very decided manner and seldom spoke to anyone except the officers. From the men I learned that both the captain and the ship were noted all over the world for the wonderfully smart passages they had made. The Daphne was a very fast sailer, and her captain was just the man to drive her.

The forward hands—that is, the men in the

forecastle — were a mixture of several nationalities. There were six Liverpool Irishmen, and the rest were Swedes, Germans, and Danes — a crowd that were what sailors call "hard."

Everything went well aboard the Daphne for the first few weeks. Favoring winds and fair weather carried us swiftly down the North Atlantic across the Equator and into the South Atlantic. Everyone on board was in good humor at the prospect of making a quick run and in the hope that we should break the record from Liverpool to Valparaiso.

As we ran down towards the South Pole the warm weather gradually forsook us, the seas became heavier, the winds stronger, and on the fortieth day out we sighted Cape Horn.

It was about seven bells in the morning watch when the land loomed up on our starboard bow. The captain had been looking for it with his marine glasses for an hour before, and I saw a pleased look come over his face when the cry of "Land, ho!" came from the masthead.

Soon a large ship under full sail was seen bearing down upon us from ahead. "Seems to me she's coming uncommon close," said the second mate.

"Keep her away a point or two," he said to the man at the wheel. The helmsman put his wheel up, and the Daphne's head spun around so as to bring the strange vessel on our beam. No sooner did the stranger notice our manœuvre than she altered her course and steered directly for us again; and then, as we watched her with wondering looks, a string of signal flags flew from her gaff. The captain was eying her closely through his telescope. "Boy," — he turned to me, — "run down in the cabin and bring up the code book." As I brought the signal book on deck, the mate snatched it from my hand and turned the pages until he found the meaning of the signal the strange ship was flying.

"How does it read, Mr. Johnson?" said the captain to the mate.

"They ask 'What ship is that?'" replied the mate. "Shall we answer them, sir?"

"No, sir," said the captain shortly. "Call both watches on deck, Mr. Johnson, and stand by 'the braces.'"

Just then a second signal fluttered on the stranger's mizzen.

I watched the skipper's finger as it ran down the

page of the code book. It stopped at this explanation: "Heave to, or I will sink you."

In an instant the captain sprang to the wheel and jammed it hard up. "Wear ship!" he roared in a stentorian voice. As the Daphne answered to her helm, the yards were hauled around, and in less than a minute she was heading in the opposite direction with the strange vessel dead astern.

Her immense hull and great spread of canvas showed that she was a man-of-war. While we looked at her a puff of white smoke shot from her bow, then came a loud report, and a ball struck the water a few yards astern of us.

"Mr. Mate," said the captain, "loose all the small sails, and set up everything. If we don't show this fellow a clean pair of heels, I'm a Dutchman."

With a freer sheet and every stitch of canvas set, the Daphne footed it through the water like a race-horse, and before nightfall our pursuer was almost out of sight. The man at the wheel was ordered to steer east, and the affairs of the ship fell into their accustomed routine. But that was not the end of it. That evening in the dog watch there was great excitement in the forecastle. All the

men were gathered around the stove discussing the strange events of the day, wondering what nation the man-of-war belonged to, why we had been fired at, and, above all, the peculiar action of the captain in not having answered the signals. For several days the course was not changed; we still steered due east, and the captain made no explanation of his behavior. The cold weather and strong winds made our lives miserable, and it was not long before signs of discontent began to show among the forward hands. Instead of turning in regularly in their watch below, they hung around the forecastle and talked in whispers. Orders were obeyed, but in a slow, provoking way, and it was easy to see that they had something on their minds.

One evening, at four bells (six o'clock), all hands came slowly aft and collected on the quarter deck.

The first mate, who was walking the poop, looked over the rail, and asked what they wanted.

"We want to spake to the cap'n," said a burly Irishman, named Mack, who acted as spokesman.

The man's loud voice found its way into the cabin where Captain Wharton was sitting. In a twinkling he bounced out of the cabin door and confronted the sullen crowd. There was fire in his

eye as he asked in stern tones: "What is it you men want to say?"

One or two of the Dutchmen looked as if they wanted to back out when they heard the captain's voice, but Mack took a step forward and spoke: —

"Cap'n Wharton," he began, waving his hand toward the rest of the men, "I spake for the fo'c's'le, and we would like ye to explain a few things for us. We would like to know, for wan thing, why ye refused to answer the signals of the man-o'-war we sighted off the Cape, and why ye turned tail and ran away from her. Another thing we would be plazed to have ye inform us is why ye 're steering east all this while, when we signed articles for Valparaiso and should be steering west. We want to know where you 're taking us, cap'n. That 's the whole story, sir, and we 've made up our minds that we 'll have an answer or knock off work."

Captain Wharton's face grew black and his eyes snapped as he listened to Mack's speech.

"You insolent scoundrel," he answered. "I shall answer none of your questions. Your duty aboard here is to obey orders, and the first man of you that refuses, I 'll string him up to the yardarm. Remem-

ber I have the law on my side and I shall use it to the utmost if necessary. Now go forward about your work."

As the hands made no move he quickly drew two revolvers. "Forward!" he thundered, and the men, seeing that he was in earnest, made their way sullenly and with many mutterings back into the forecastle.

The crew of the Daphne did not "knock off," as they had said; but during the next few days, on one pretext or another, all but two of them feigned sickness and took to their berths. We were so shorthanded that the afterguard, that is, the cook, the steward, carpenter, etc., had to stand their watch. The captain relieved the first mate, and the second mate took the wheel when he came on deck. In this manner the men hoped to bring the captain to terms. He could not force them to work if they were sick, and how was he to prove that they were not sick?

But Captain Wharton was not to be bulldozed in this manner. It was evident he intended to make them tired of their scheme, for he ordered the steward to serve short rations.

When I was on the poop a night or two after, I

heard the mate say to the captain: "What are we going to do, sir, if it comes on to blow?"

"You leave the men alone for that," replied the skipper; "they'll come out fast enough if there's any danger."

"Don't you think it would be as well to tell them, sir, and save trouble?" asked the mate mysteriously.

"No, Mr. Johnson," answered the captain. "It's impossible;" and he walked aft to the compass.

I made my way forward, wondering what they meant. At the galley, where I stopped for my pannikin of tea, the cook called me inside.

"Look here, my son," he said in a low voice, "there may be a row to-night and you want to stand clear."

"Why, what's up, doctor?" I asked.

"Oh, nothing particular," he answered cautiously, "but if anything happens, you get out of the way, that's all."

"All right," I replied, for I saw he was serious.

My bunk was in the deckhouse with the steward, and that dog watch, instead of reading, as I usually did, I sat thinking over the strange events of the voyage. At one bell (a quarter of eight) I heard

whispering outside the door, and, looking out into the darkness, I saw dimly the forms of several men in the scuppers. They were on their hands and knees, creeping aft. A thrill of horror ran through me, as in the ray of light which streamed from the galley window I caught the glint of a knife. Frightened though I was, I followed them. It was the mate's watch on deck; the captain and he were walking the poop. Mack, one of the men who had not feigned sickness, was at the wheel.

"Bright light ahead, sir!" shouted an excited voice from the lookout.

Both captain and mate ran to the poop rail to look forward, and immediately Mack left the wheel, and, running lightly up behind the captain, lifted an iron belaying pin. The crushing blow that followed fell harmlessly, for the captain had heard the man's rapid breathing and jumped to one side. The next instant the report of a revolver rang out. Mack staggered and fell. Then, with shouts and pistol shots, the rest of the mutineers rushed to the poop; the fall of their leader only seemed to madden them. Keeping the crowd at bay with their revolvers, the captain and mate slowly backed down the companionway and bolted the doors.

The fury of the men was turned for a moment upon the unfortunate steward, who had held the doors open for the captain to escape, but had been caught himself. He was deliberately dragged to the ship's side and thrown overboard. The second mate, who had run out on deck upon hearing the noise, and had climbed the rigging for safety, was made a target of and fairly riddled with bullets. The carpenter and sailmaker had managed to escape into the cabin, from whence they, with the captain and the mate, were keeping up a constant fire upon the mutineers.

With one of their number dead and three wounded, the mutineers retreated to the forecastle to consider some means of dislodging those in the cabin. Though in number they more than doubled the officers, their stock of ammunition was exhausted, while the cabin was well provided.

In the meantime I had been perched on top of the galley behind one of the ship's cutters, watching the fight, first with fright, and then — finding that no one took the slightest notice of me — with great interest, wondering how it would all end.

Soon there was a rush of feet from forward again, and the men appeared, carrying a heavy spar, which

they proceeded to use upon the cabin door as a battering ram.

One, two, three smashing blows and the doors burst inward. The mutineers had gained an entrance. Then from out of the cabin came the muffled sounds of a fierce hand-to-hand conflict. Overcome with excitement I crept toward the poop and looked down the skylight upon the scene. The captain was struggling violently in the grasp of three of the men, who were trying to secure him. Smack! The captain's right hand shot out and one of his assailants dropped like a log upon the deck. For an instant the remaining two shrank back, and I saw the captain pull out a handful of cartridges to reload his empty revolver, but before he could slip them in, a steel marline spike, deftly thrown from the other side of the cabin, struck him full in the forehead and he sank senseless across the settee. The fall of the captain ended the desperate battle, for the carpenter and sailmaker had long been struck down; and the mate, seeing further resistance would be worse than useless, surrendered.

All this while the wheel had been deserted and the vessel was yawing all over the compass.

Fearing that, if taken aback, she might lose her masts, I took the wheel and kept her dead before the wind.

About midnight a dead silence fell over the Daphne and a great fear came over me as I steered alone. As I shivered with dread and the chill night air a man came up the companionway and slowly dragged his way toward me. I was so nervous that I was about to run, when I saw that it was the mate, who made a sign for me to keep quiet.

"Sh–h," he whispered, "don't make a noise or that rascally cook will be up here. Boy," he continued, "do you want to see your mother again?"

I nodded.

"Then listen to me. The men are not likely to hurt you as long as you do what they tell you to, and, if you are cautious, you may be the means of saving us all. I want you to fall right in with them and be guided by events as they crop up. If they don't murder us, we may yet be able to save the ship. Here, take these," he said, thrusting a revolver and several boxes of cartridges into my hands; "hide them somewhere and they may be of use."

Just then heavy steps sounded on the companionway, and the mate, with a hurried word of warning, ran forward. The next moment the cook appeared.

"Hello, sonny," he said in a half-drunken tone, "you running the ship now?"

"Yes, sir," I answered, shaking in my shoes, "how shall I steer?"

"Oh, keep her as she goes," he answered good-naturedly. Then he laid himself down on the sky-light and fell to snoring.

All through that long weary night I kept the Daphne on her course, until the first gray streaks of dawn appeared on the horizon, and then I fell across the wheel box, exhausted and asleep.

When I awoke, the mutineers had assumed charge of the ship and were running her on regular watches. The cook had been elected captain and all hands were quartered in the cabin. The captain, mate, carpenter, and sailmaker were locked securely in the deck house, and I was ordered to tend the galley in the cook's place.

One of the first things I noticed under the new state of affairs was the change in our course. Hitherto Captain Wharton's steering orders had been due east; now we were heading northeast and running into warmer weather. For several days I was unable to find out the intentions of the mutineers.

A PUFF OF WHITE SMOKE SHOT FROM HER BOW.

There were days when the men gathered together in the cabin and talked for hours, and by keeping my ears open I discovered their plans. The cook, knowing enough about navigation to run the Daphne by "dead reckoning," it was decided they should steer for one of the islands in the Tuamotu Group — the most easterly in Oceanica — and there land Captain Wharton and his three associates. After that the mutineers proposed changing the Daphne's name and sailing for the coast of Peru, there to offer their services to the Peruvian government, which, as I have said before, was at war with Chili.

This the men thought the only practical means of hiding their identity, for to try to sell the ship in any port would undoubtedly lead to their being discovered and hanged. From the chart, upon which the ship's position had been "pricked off" every day, the men found that we were about the longitude of the Island of Mauritius, and their scheme was to run northward to latitude forty degrees and then sail on that parallel until they sighted the southern shores of Australia. This would give them their bearings afresh, and they could then head for Polynesia.

Now there was a small scuttle or airhole in the roof of the deck house, and through this I kept the captain and his fellow-prisoners informed as to the doings of the mutineers.

During the days that followed, the men amused themselves by trading among themselves the arms, clothes, and valuables which they had found in the cabin. Occasionally they quarreled, but the new captain proved himself a man equal to the emergency and promptly quelled all disturbances with an iron hand.

From habit they kept the ship clean and sailed her in a seamanlike manner, but they were an uneasy, suspicious crowd, always steering away from a passing sail, and ever haunted with superstitious fears.

At last Australia was sighted, somewhere near Adelaide, it was thought, and we followed the coastline around past Port Phillips, through Bass' Straits, until the great island continent was left, like a great bank of clouds, far astern.

The North Cape of New Zealand was the next land we sighted, and from this point the Daphne was headed for the myriad islands of the South Pacific, steering east by north. That night I

whispered this news to Captain Wharton through the scuttle.

"How is she heading now?" he asked.

"East by north, sir," I replied.

"Do you think you can get me the charts (maps) of the South Pacific from Mr. Johnson's room?" was his next question.

"I'll try, sir," said I; "nobody sleeps in the mate's room now."

"All right, sonny, try it, and if you can secure them, pass them down through the scuttle."

In less than ten minutes the captain had the papers and I waited for further orders.

A low hiss warned me that he wanted to speak again. "Are you there, boy?"

"Yes, sir."

Slowly and distinctly then the captain spoke: "I am going to entrust you with a mission which, if you are successful, may be the means of saving the ship and perhaps our lives. If you do not succeed, you will at least have the satisfaction of knowing that you did your best and worked for the right. What I want you to do is to alter the ship's compass, and this is the way you can do it. Right aft in the cabin in one of the lockers you will find a

large magnet used for testing purposes, and you must take it on deck and place it somewhere near the compass, so that the needle, instead of pointing due north, as it does now, will point a little to the eastward — that is, north by east. You can easily shift the needle by putting the magnet on one side or the other, and you will be able to prove your work by comparing it with the small compass hanging in the cabin. If, by the small compass, the ship's head points east, the compass on deck must point east by north. In this way the men will think they are steering east by north, when in reality they will be sailing due east. Do you understand that, my boy?"

"Yes, sir," I answered.

"Then when you have fixed the deck compass in the way I have told you, you must manage to break the other one so that the men may not notice the change. You must do this as soon as possible, for every hour now makes a difference."

"All right, sir," I said. "I 'll try to-night. Good night, sir."

"Good night, sonny," he answered. "God bless you for your faithfulness."

Before daylight the next day I had accomplished

my task. The deck compass was altered, the cabin compass broken, and the Daphne's course was again shaped by her rightful captain.

During the weeks that followed, the mutineers, thoroughly alive to their desperate situation, worked hard to change the appearance of the Daphne, and their efforts were certainly successful. Even the Daphne's owners, had they seen her, would not have recognized their smart little vessel. Instead of the black-painted, bark-rigged Daphne of Liverpool, there now sailed the Sally Studwell of New York, a full-rigged ship painted white. This task had taken about four weeks to accomplish, and by this time the men were eagerly looking for land. According to the "dead reckoning" of the cook, they should have sighted some of the islands a week ago, and they were becoming uneasy. Night and day a watch was kept from aloft. The cook went over his figures again and again, but always with the same result. He could not explain why we had not seen land, but was certain that we were steering in the right direction, and so we still kept the same course.

"There's no need to be skeered, boys," said the cook to the men; "we're steering straight for a

bunch o' islands, and, if the reckoning is a bit out, we 're bound to strike some on 'em sooner or later."

So one of the boats was put in order to go ashore, and the anchor made ready to drop at a moment's notice.

A few days afterwards, when I was making my nightly report through the scuttle to the captain, I learned that, from his calculations, we ought to sight land within the next twenty-four hours, if the wind kept steady; and he gave me many instructions.

My first work was to secure all the powder, shot, and cartridges in the cabin, and transfer them to the deck house; then I managed to smuggle in to the prisoners a few tools with which they could cut their way out at the right moment, and I waited with suppressed excitement for the end.

About three o'clock the following morning I was awakened out of a sound sleep by the cry of "Land, ho!" Instantly all hands turned out and ran forward to gaze at what appeared to be a big black cloud right ahead of us.

"Mighty high land," said one of the men.

"Some o' these islands is mountainous," replied the cook assuringly. "I guess, boys, we 'd better

run her close in shore and drop the anchor until daylight. Hello!" he continued in a tone of surprise, "there 's a light. See it, boys? Seems to be down at the foot of the mountain."

"Yes, yes!" said the rest excitedly.

"Must be a native village or some little cocoanut port," said the cook.

But as they eagerly scanned the nearing shore their surprise grew greater, for other lights appeared, and it was evident that at the foot of the high land lay a seaport of no mean size. A dread of the unknown seized upon the mutineers' guilty consciences; their cowardly hearts weakened at the thought of danger and they talked confusedly, hesitating whether they should run into the strange harbor or not.

Once more the cook spoke and asserted himself.

"Lads," he began, "it 's no good all of yer jabbering like a lot of East Indy coolies over this 'ere thing. You 'lected me cap'n; now listen ter what yer cap'n has ter say. This 'ere harbor ahead of us may be among the islands, and maybe it 's somewheres else, but, anyway, what difference does it make? We ain't a-goin' ter stay at sea forever; we 've got ter put into port some time or another,

and we may as well begin now. My notion is ter run in here and see where we are. If we don't want ter stay, all we have ter do is ter hyst the anchor and get out again."

"But vat shall ve do mit der skibber und de oder shaps," asked one of the Dutchmen, named Hans.

"We 'll fix them all right," answered the cook. "If this place is one o' the islands, we 'll just put 'em in the boat and let 'em pull ashore while we sail on to Peru. If it ain't the islands, we 'll give 'em all an inch or two o' cold steel and heave 'em overboard. I wish we 'd done it afore. I 'tell yer, boys, it ain't no use a-tryin' to be overnice at this stage o' the game. We 've got to purtect ourselves, and we might as well be strung up fer six as for two. What do yer say? Are ye 's all agreeable?"

A murmur of assent ran through the group.

Leaving the men talking and wondering, I climbed to the top of the deck house and gave Captain Wharton the news.

"Good!" he whispered when he had heard my story. "They are making things easy for us. Now, my boy, you want to stand by with that revolver of yours, for these men are desperate, and we are all weak from being shut up so long; but

go now and get the flag ready, and before daylight breaks, creep up aloft, and make it fast to one of the stays; you cannot hoist it aft, for the man at the wheel will see you. And don't forget to fly it upside down."

"Ay, ay, sir," I replied; and away I hurried to the mate's locker for the ensign. Choosing the main-mast as being out of sight both of the men forward and the helmsman, I cautiously made my way up to the royal yard, and in a few minutes had the signal of distress fluttering in the breeze. Sailing into a port with such a signal as this would soon bring a swarm of boats off to discover what was wrong. Then I quietly slid down to the deck, keeping close in to the mast for fear I should be seen.

Going forward again, I found the men still talking and straining their eyes to pierce the uncertain light of the approaching morn. A slight fog began to rise from the water as the day broke, obstructing the view more than ever, and the men fumed at it, waiting impatiently for the sun to rise. On sped the Daphne toward the shore with swelling canvas in the moist morning breeze, and then the sun shot up from the horizon, the mist was dispelled as if by magic, and a great bay, filled with vessels, came in

sight. All hands looked around in wonder and apprehension.

"What place is it, boys?" said the cook in a strange voice. "Do any of you know it?"

There was a moment's silence, as everyone looked for landmarks. Hans, who was first running on one side of the forecastle head and then on the other, suddenly exclaimed: "Yah, yah, ich habe es gesehn, see der three leedle hills dere; dat is der fore, main, und mizzen. I come here tree years ago. I"—

"The name! the name!" shouted everyone.

"Valparaiso," answered Hans.

"Valparaiso!" exclaimed the mutineers in a breath.

"You lie!" said the cook, going up to Hans and catching him by the throat.

"No, no!" choked the Dutchman; "I speak true. Vat for I lie?"

"Then about ship!" shouted the cook. "Quick, boys, to the braces; we cannot afford to drop anchor in this port."

But as the cook spoke, his words were drowned by the stentorian tones of a familiar voice, and Captain Wharton stood before them, revolver in

hand. Behind him were the three other officers and myself, all likewise armed.

"The first man of you that moves will be shot," said the captain quietly.

Looking directly at the cook, he continued: "You have played your little game, Sam Watson, and you have lost. Now it is my turn."

The mutineers stood thunderstruck. The surprise completely cowed them, for the moment at least. Then I saw a dangerous light come into the cook's eyes. Quickly drawing his knife, he rushed at the captain. But Captain Wharton was too quick for him. There was a sharp report of a revolver, and the murderous ruffian fell writhing upon the deck — shot through the shoulder. The rest of the men quietly submitted.

"Now, Mr. Mate," said the captain, "let go all the halyards and make the man at the wheel bring her head to the wind. If he will not obey, shoot him."

In a few minutes more the anchor was let go, the Daphne swung to thirty fathoms of chain, and we were surrounded by a small fleet of boats.

The first to come aboard were the harbor police, and the mutineers were handed over to them at once.

Thus ended the eventful voyage of the Daphne. Now let me explain the strange occurrences of it.

The Daphne left Liverpool with a load of coal, it was supposed, but in reality she carried under a layer of these black diamonds a cargo of ammunition for the Chilian government. No one aboard knew this but the captain and mate, and they were bound to secrecy by the owners of the vessel.

The man-of-war which attempted to capture the Daphne, when she was trying to round Cape Horn, was commissioned by the government of Peru, which had in some way learned of the Daphne's cargo, and had been sent down to the Cape to intercept her.

Captain Wharton was quick to discern this when the strange vessel gave chase, and determined to cheat the Peruvians by sailing around the other way to Valparaiso.

Before closing, I may say that of the mutineers of the Daphne two men were hanged, and the remainder were sentenced to imprisonment for the rest of their natural lives.

TROUBLE IN DARK HOLLOW.

BY

WILL ALLEN DROMGOOLE.

TROUBLE IN DARK HOLLOW.

SHUT in by the great gloomy spires of the Cumberlands, under the frown of the mountains, with one narrow neck leading out into the world beyond; such is Dark Hollow.

Dark with the shadows cast by the surrounding peaks and the rank, riotous growth of the forest below.

Delightfully cool in summer, magnificently wild, pathetically alluring, and hopelessly lonely always. In winter the ice columns rear themselves fifty and a hundred feet under the dripping, draining bluffs, catching now and then an unwary fern in the coagulation and holding it, a summer captive in the grasp of grim old winter. Sometimes the wintergreen berries peep from the bluff above through a veil of filmy ice, cheery, saucy, and full of a warm, mute faith.

Gabe Brady found but little to admire in the winter wildness as he stopped to rest his oxen under one of the great bluffs that frown upon the

Hollow. He glanced up at the glistening ice columns and the imprisoned ferns, and whistled, half in jest, half in earnest.

"We-uns air like that ther yarb," he said, "frez up fur the winter. Frez up to be sho'; ther' ain't no haul'n' of a load up the Hollow sech weather ez this. Them doz'n poplar logs hev' done tired the critters plum out. We-uns orter crawl in a hole and sleep in winter-time like the b'ars does, ha! ha! What does you-uns think 'bout'n it, Queenie?"

From the top of the loaded wagon and from a bundle of old quilts, a black bearskin, and a faded red shawl, came the saucy answer in the piping voice of a privileged child: —

"I ain't faultin' uv the weather none ez I knows on. It air older 'n I be; I ain't got no call ter fault it."

"To be sho' yer ain't, yer sassy little cub," chuckled Gabe, "muffled up in yer furs like a white kitten, an' a-ridin' in yer fine kerridge while yer old dad an' yer big brother air trompin' uv it, yer kin lick yer paws an' pass complemints on the weather, hey? Waal, I reckin."

The only answer vouchsafed from the promiscuous bundle was a muffled chuckle, while the "big

brother" alluded to, an overgrown boy of fifteen, kicked the half-frozen mud from his shoes on the hub of the wagon wheel and laughed at what he called "Jo's peartness."

"Hit 's mighty funny, air it?" said Gabe as he arranged the heavy yoke about the necks of the patient beasts. "Hit air mighty funny? Waal, I 'low you-uns kin fetch the naixt load 'thout my holpin' uv ye, yer seems ter favor the job so highly. Mebbe ye kin git 'long better 'thout yer ole dad, anyhow; hey, Kit?"

Before the boy could reply, Jo, or Queenie, as Gabe Brady insisted upon calling his daughter, put her bushy brown head out from her wrappings of fur and wool and said saucily: —

"Y' orter fetch yer wood in summer, dad, an' save shoe luther."

Gabe laughed aloud; his pet piece of advice had been tossed back to him. He rested an arm on the wooden yoke and struck the palm of one hand with the forefinger of the other, ready for argument.

"Waal, honey," he said, "it air too warm ter haul in summer-time, don't yer know?" and then, after a moment's thought, "an' it air too cold in winter.

Lawd! Lawd! it do seem ez ef the Almighty can't fix things ter please us, nohow."

He dropped his hands, shook his head in disgust, and gathered up the ropes.

"Git up, Jinks! Git up, Rube!" he called. "We-uns hev' got to be a-hustlin'."

He trudged along by the side of his team, turning his head now and then to see if the precious bundle on top was safe and comfortable. Kit, the brother and son, followed on the other side, his hands thrust into the pockets of his coat.

Not a sound broke the stillness of the Hollow, except the creak, crack, and croaking of Gabe's wagon, or the occasional snapping of his long whip as the oxen ignored the repeated "Whoa, ge–e!" and infringed upon the driver's part of the road.

The peaks uplifted above the Hollow were heavily veiled with mist, half blue, half madder, uncertain, vague, dreamy, and magnificent.

A covey of snowbirds flew by with a startled "whi–r–r!" and disappeared down one of the wild gulches with which the Hollow abounds.

"I 'll make a trap soon 's I git home," thought Kit, "me 'n' Jo."

Indeed, Jo was included in every program ever

planned at Gabe Brady's cabin; she was first in everybody's thoughts and entered largely into everybody's calculations.

"Seein' she ain't got no mammy we-uns humors her some," Gabe would say by way of apology for his little girl's authority, exercised boldly and often. But he would immediately add, as if to gainsay any possible injustice done his darling: —

"But Queenie air peart, powerful peart fur her age, she air jist turned seben."

"Seben, goin' on eight," Jo would amend; "be eight come naixt Christmas."

Considering the fact that Christmas would not come for eleven months and twenty days, Gabe was not far from correct when he said his daughter was "jist turned seben."

The ox-wagon drew up before the door of the cabin, the wood was thrown into a pile, and Gabe went to the shed for his axe, while the brother and sister went into the cabin to rake up the coals, and make the trap for catching the snowbirds.

When Gabe came in, bringing the axe, he found Jo toasting her toes before the blaze of the kitchen fire, while Kit prepared the yellow pine sticks for the trap building.

Gabe hesitated to break into the arrangement; he was only an ignorant, untaught mountaineer, but he understood and enjoyed the companionship, so entire and satisfying, his children found in each other. Still he was a systematic man, and when there was a task to be done his hands were swift to do it.

He looked down at the pile of pine sticks from which Kit was making a selection. As the boy drew his knife from his pocket, Gabe spoke: —

"Sonny," he said, "ye'll hev' ter turn the grin'-stun a minit, fur the axe air dull some."

Jo looked up from the shoestring she was trying vainly to unknot.

"Kit air makin' uv a trap," she said. "Kit air too busy fur grin'-stuns an' sech."

Gabe showed his teeth in a pleased smile. Jo's "peartness" always pleased him.

"Waal," he said, "ef Kit air busy, who air goin' ter turn fur yer ole dad?"

He slipped the axe through his hands, and while the pole rested upon the toe of his boot he leaned upon the handle and put his question again: —

"Who's goin' ter holp yer ole dad, I'd like ter know?"

"Me," she replied, and Gabe fairly shook with laughter.

"Shucks!" he said, "ye little sparrow, ye; I'd like ter know how ye got yer eddication, turnin' uv grin'-stuns an' sech."

Jo showed spirit at this implied reflection upon her ability.

"I kin anyhow," she declared. "I turns fur Kit, an' our axe what we-uns grin's don't git dull in one choppin', neither, there! Gimme a shoe-string."

In her excitement she had pulled too vigorously upon the worn leather lacer, and it snapped beneath the strain.

Gabe selected another from a bunch hanging by the mantelshelf, and Jo tossed the shoe to Kit.

"Fix it, Kit," she commanded, "an' git yer sticks all split 'g'inst we-uns grin's the axe."

And so the work went cheerily on, as it always did at Gabe Brady's cabin in the Hollow, in spite of cold and poverty and ignorance. There was something in the hearts of these untaught ones that lightened the day's labor and brightened the dull kitchen and kept the soul singing. Something nature had placed there; something that transforms

the hut into a paradise, and without which the princely hearth is desolate, — sympathy.

When the grinding was finished, and Gabe was singing away at the woodpile, Jo came and sat down beside Kit on the floor.

Four sticks systematically arranged in the form of a square, the four corners crossed, a ball of stout cord, and a half-dozen other sticks waited Jo's coming.

"Tie 'em tight, Jo," advised Kit; "tie every corner tight an' allus leave string enough ter tie everyone plumb ter the top; traps ain't fitten fur nuthin' ef the string air broke."

Slowly, stick by stick, the trap took shape, until at length it was finished. As strong and secure a trap as could be desired, even for the most diminutive sparrow that ever skipped a prison.

Kit held it at arm's length and admired it.

"I calls that a fust-rate job," he declared.

"We made it fust-rate," Jo amended as usual.

"Does you-uns aim ter ketch a b'ar?" asked Gabe, who had entered while the trap was under examination.

"Hit ain't too big," said Kit, who understood the sarcasm of his father's remark.

"Hit air roomy," Gabe insisted, "but hit 'll answer. Wher does ye aim ter set it?"

"Over ter Middle Ridge," said Kit; "ther 's some snow ther, and Luke Simpson 'lowed ter me ez ther wuz more game on the Ridge 'n yer could shake er stick at."

Gabe looked doubtful. "Does yer aim ter kerry the little gal along?" he asked.

"I aims to go," Jo answered for herself.

"Hit air toler'ble fur," Gabe argued, "an' word kem ter the Holler ez ther wuz a b'ar killed on Middle Ridge last Sadday. Had n't yer better set it nigher home, or leave the little gal behind?"

Gabe thrust his boot into the blaze; the well-burned log fell apart, half falling either side of the chimneyplace, while the saucy sparks snapped and sparkled and disappeared up the sooty chimney.

"Naw," said Kit. "I don't want ter go if Jo can't. I promised ter take her, an' I 'low I kin keep the varmints off 'n Jo, an' fetch her back all right. Jo ain't no baby; she kin tromp roun' same 's a boy, Jo kin."

"I kin fetch the birds back, too;" Jo paid the additional compliment to her usefulness.

"S'posin' the birds turns out rabbits?" suggested Gabe.

"We aims ter shoot a b'ar," Kit admitted with an embarrassed grin.

"I reckin," assented Gabe, "cur'us b'ar there on Middle Ridge; don't need no dogs ter ferret 'em out, nor nuthin'; jest stan's on th'ir hin' feet an' axes to be shot. Mighty 'commodatin' b'ar; what does you-uns think uv it, Queenie?"

"I think I air goin'," was the reply, and as usual she had her own way; against Gabe's judgment, and with many cautions and admonitions and warnings, and a promise to be back promptly at sundown.

Woody and wild and lonely, full of jutting crags and unexplored caverns, isolated and unattractive save for its undisputed grandeur, no man cared to plant his dwelling on the dangerous height known as the Middle Ridge.

Even the hunters, lured by the abundance of game, deer, fox, wildcat, and even bear, when night came on would pitch their tents as near as possible to the cabins dotting the side and base of the Ridge.

In daylight, however, there was no cause for

"Y'ORTER FETCH YER WOOD IN SUMMER, DAD, AN' SAVE SHOE LUTHER."

alarm; the wildcat fled before the approach of humanity and bruin seldom made his appearance without warm and continued insistence. Jo had hunted huckleberries, wild grapes, persimmons, and hazelnuts with Kit and Luke Simpson every spring and autumn since she could remember. But their excursions had never extended farther than the lower side of the Ridge when Jo formed one of the company. This was her first real trip to the Ridge; and as she stood under a great overhanging ledge and looked down upon the Hollow, humble, noiseless, and tiny, nestled among the purple-painted mountains, hugging their very feet like a slave at the footstool of a monarch, she clapped her hands with wild delight.

Far away to the south Peak's Mountain rose, wrapped in filmy, delicate azure; nearer towered the familiar heights of Beersheba; while winding away to the westward, like a serpent following a zigzag trail, ran the distorted contortion known as the Backbone.

There was but a sprinkle of snow on the Ridge, and Kit felt that he had brought his birdtrap to little purpose. However, he set it, well baited with bread crumbs, in a bank of drifted snow, just with-

out the ledge where Jo stood ankle deep in the rustling dead leaves which the wind had heaped under the arched rock Kit scooped the leaves into a nest and cunningly tucked her into it.

"You-uns set here an' watch fur snowbirds," he said. "An' whatever ye does don't yer move away till we-uns gits back. We air goin' up the Ridge a little higher fur a b'ar."

"Holler when yer gits it?" asked Jo with a merry little laugh.

"Ye misdoubts we-uns 'll git it, I s'pose," said Luke.

"I 'll eat all yer kills," was the only compromise she offered as she crouched deeper into the crisp, dry leaves, and the two youthful hunters started again up the Ridge.

Once Kit looked back. It did not seem altogether the proper thing to leave her there. He shook his finger warningly: "Don't you move ; the b'ar 'll eat yer ef yer does."

Jo, left to herself, cuddled down among the crisp, warm leaves, like a young cub. Afraid of the bears? Not she ; she laughed at the idea. It may be she was too young, it may have been because of her wild mountain life, its freedom and security ; at any

rate accustomed to roam over the hills and through the forests, she felt no fear of the dangers that might lurk about the Middle Ridge.

For some time she sat there in her nest of leaves, watching the cloud-shadows upon the Hollow, or clapping her hands gleefully whenever Kit's rifle rang out, clear and sharp, farther up the mountain.

Then the waiting became monotonous, the guns were too far off to be heard; the last shot sounded miles and miles away, Jo thought.

It was tiresome, the waiting, and both feet were fast asleep, she had sat still so long. She pinched her toe to wake it up, but the effect was only to send a sharp, prickly sensation tingling through the entire foot. She stood up; ah! that was better, and she concluded to walk about some and find something, maybe, that would amuse her and help to pass the monotonous hours.

But there was nothing under the crag but dry leaves, and one great flat stone propped against the side wall of the shelving alcove.

"Looks like a cubby door," laughed Jo; "mebbe the b'ars keeps house ther'."

She peeped behind the "door," and, sure enough,

there was a small circular opening leading under the great Ridge.

Jo almost screamed with delight.

"I 'll hide, an' 'tend like I 'm losted," she said, and, stooping, she peeped further into the cave.

It was not very dark and was truly magnificently finished. Jo crawled in on hands and feet; how warm and good it was after waiting so long in the cold.

She concluded to remain a moment where she was until the warmth of the place should thoroughly penetrate her chilled limbs; then she would look about her at "Mr. B'ar's house."

The floor was of soft white sand, and Jo, doubling her shawl for a pillow, stretched herself upon her back to admire the glistening stalactites hanging above her. How distinct, how perfect they were; each one had a firm, rock grasp upon the vaulted roof. Was she sure of that? Jo smiled lazily to see one of the longest and heaviest suddenly leave its place and swing partners with its opposite neighbor; then the entire crowd began to grow restless and to move up and down, swift and swifter, in a mad whirl; they were drunk, crazy, she could n't exactly remember which. And at that

moment a gun sounded a report far away and muffled by a distance, and the large stalactite was suddenly transformed into a great black bear that opened its mouth and swallowed the smaller ones.

Jo would have screamed, so terribly was she frightened, only that her lips were locked and she could not utter a sound. She was utterly dumb with fear; at that moment, when she thought the monster about to turn upon her, a covey of snow-birds flew by and, lifting her upon their wings, bore her gently, easily, tenderly away; somewhere, it did not matter where, the motion was so easy. She was floating in the air — going, going; she smiled again and gave herself to the long, long journey southward into sunlight, away from the Hollow. Once there was a thundering crash, but the birds told her it was only the falling in of the cave she had left. Once she was almost sure she heard her father calling, "Queenie! Queenie!" But it was only the brooks laughing and the sunbeams dancing in the land through which they traveled — the beautiful land of dreams.

The sun was slanting alarmingly westward when Kit Brady and Luke Simpson turned their faces homeward. Against the latter's inclination, how-

ever; for the young hunters had brought down no nobler game than a couple of rabbits.

"Hit air two good hours afore night," Luke insisted. But Kit pointed toward the crimsoning west.

"When the sun straddles that ther' Backbone of the mount'n," said he, "he takes a mighty fast trot down on t' other side."

"I 'm plumb shame ter go back thout 'n any b'ar," insisted Luke.

"Can't help yer shame," said Kit; "it be time fur me ter light out!"

"An' mam jist lon'in' fur some wil' meat, an' so air the chillen. They-uns 'll be plumb disappointed ter see me come snakin' up two hours by sun with nuthin' 'cept'n' of a rabbit."

"See here, Luke," said Kit, "ef ye wants ter stay here and hunt meat fur yer folks, ye stay. I air goin' home ter split wood fur mine. I tell ye it 'll be plumb dark in the Holler 'g'inst we git ther'."

And Kit was right; he could hear the cowbells tinkling already, and even the sound of the woodman's axe as some shiftless mountaineer chopped his necessary evening's fuel.

Kit grew restless and uneasy as they descended

the Ridge through the crackling branches and rustling dead leaves.

Queenie! "She must be stiff frez by this time," he said, "an' I 'low she air plumb scairt ter death."

"Jo ain't no fool, nor no idjit, nuther," said Luke; "she air bred an' born'd in the Holler an' she knows ther ain't no call ter get shuck up in broad daylight."

Kit was comforted somewhat.

"Naw," he assented; "Jo ain't no fool, an' she ain't no coward, nuther. She air plucky, Jo air, plumb game ter the backbone."

Yet as the sun crept farther and farther over the Backbone, and the distance between him and the spot where they had left Jo rapidly lessened, his fears returned. She was such a little thing, it was a shame to have deserted her so long. Yet she was such a brave little thing, too; he knew she was not afraid. It was n't always safe in the forest. Only a month before a panther had been killed in the Ridge, and bears were constantly prowling around. Poor Kit! he was beset by so many different emotions; first of fear, then of hope.

"I sholy reckin nothin' could worrit Jo," he said again and again as he trudged on as rapidly as

might be to join her. But when they stood at length under the cliff and found the place deserted, not a sign of the child anywhere, the two boys were for a moment speechless with fear and surprise.

"A painter hev' got her, I jest knows it," said Kit. "What 'll dad say o' me goin' off an' leavin' Jo ter wil' cats an' things? Oh, what 'll dad say?"

"Waal, ef I ware in yer place, I 'd look around a bit afore I 'd begin ter whimper like you-uns air a-doin'," said Luke. "Mebbe as not Jo 's jest hidin' ter werrit we-uns. Holler out loud an' see ef she don't answer."

So Kit called; once, twice, a dozen times, but there was no other answer than the wind in the cedars, or a far-away whip-poor-will calling plaintively to the night.

Then Luke adopted a ruse: —

"Jo!" he called. "Aw, Jo! we-uns knows ye air jest foolin'. An' we air goin' off an' leave you ef ye don't come out'n thar."

"Thar" meaning the hiding-place Jo was supposed to have chosen. But even this threat was powerless to provoke a response. Then Luke fired his gun and both boys shouted: "A b'ar! a b'ar!"

but the only answer was the ever-ready echoes calling jubilantly among the crags.

"She 's a-playin' 'possum," said Luke. "I jest knows she air."

And they fired the gun again three times, and again shouted "B'ar!" but all to no purpose. And then even skeptical Luke became alarmed no less than Kit. It was evident that Jo was lost.

"Mebbe she hev' gone home," said Kit.

"Not by her lone se'f," said Luke; "more likely she tried ter go an' got lost."

She was certainly lost; there were the leaves just as they had heaped them into a little brown nest, but the little brown bird had flown, the nest was empty.

To make matters worse, the sun, indifferent to human needs and anxieties, cast one long, jubilant beam into the darksome niche and dropped suddenly behind the Backbone, leaving the Hollow in darkness.

"O Lu!" said Kit, "hit air night, an' Jo air not foun'. Do ye reckin she could 'a' gone home, Luke?"

"Naw," said Luke; "I know she ain't done no sech o' a thing. She air lost, an' we-uns better be

makin' tracks ter tell it, stid o' prowlin' roun' here rakin' 'mongst dead leaves an' shakin' o' dead bresh.

"She air lost. I allus 'lowed as gal chillen did n't have no call ter be a-trampin' roun' after boys, nohow. First place, 't ain't manners; second place, they ain't fitten fur that kind o' work. I be goin' home my own se'f."

Kit forgot his anxiety for a moment in his anger. The idea of going off and leaving a helpless little girl alone on the mountain all night was something too cowardly contemptible to contemplate for an instant.

"Ef ye air minded ter go, Luke Simpson, ye kin go!" he exclaimed. "Ef ye air so coward disposed ye orter run 'long home ter yer mammy. An' ye better trot long toler'ble peart else the dark ull overtake ye foreshortly. I knows in reason ye air bound ter be afeared o' the dark, sech a puny little snaggle-tooth baby ez ye be. Go along o' ye! Ez fur me, I hev' settled it in my own min' ef Jo air ter sleep all night on the Ridge she air not goin' to be the only one ter do that. I ain't goin' ter leave it till she air found; not ef it takes till the judgment day."

He bit his lips to keep back the tears, for rough boy as he was there was a warm, brave heart in the bosom of Kit Brady. Even thoughtless Luke was touched by the boy's tears.

"I ware not aimin' ter run away fur being 'feard, Kit," he said. "But I 'lowed someun ought ter know ez quick ez might be. It be toler'ble col' on the Ridge, an' Jo air sech a little mite. One o' we-uns ought to go an' gin the alarm in the Holler. You-uns go, an' I ull stay here an' hunt if ye say so. I ain't a-keerin' which, unly someun ought ter go ; hit 'll soon be plumb, good dark."

"I 'd ruther die ez ter go back without Queenie," sobbed Kit. "I 'd ruther drap dead in my tracks ez ter go back ter dad an' tell him ez I hev' lost her. She air the light o' his soul, Jo air. I would n't go back an' tell him I hev' done gone an' lost her, mebbe lef' her fur a painter ter eat, not fur all the Holler. I 'd cut my tongue out first."

Before Kit's mind passed in panoramic swiftness and precision the scene at the cabin when the news of the trouble should reach it. The look upon his father's face — he could see it as distinctly as he saw it the day his mother lay in her white pine coffin. And then the empty little chair in the chimney

corner — that was Jo's chair and Jo's corner where she sat every evening and "sassed" her father and big brother. Nobody ever thought of that chair without Jo in it, and now — oh, the desolate days, the lonely, grief-burdened nights that were in store for them, should his sister indeed be lost to them forever! He pressed his fingers upon his eyes to shut out the horrible picture. The next moment faith reasserted itself; he called himself a fool for thinking Jo would not be found.

"Go on, Luke," he said; "I ware that worrit I did n't know what I ware a-sayin'. You-uns go on ez spry ez ye ever kivered groun' in yer life, an' gin the alarm. Wake up the Holler — half of it air asleep by sundown, an' t' other half noddin'. Stop at Parson Tate's ez ye go by — hit 's the first place — an' start him over to tell dad. He 'll break it more like somethin' than t' others. Then holler it out ez ye go, ye knows how, an' the Holler folks 'll understand. They-uns knows what it air ter be lost on Middle Ridge. Run on; I air not goin' ter leave this here mount'n till Jo leaves it. Go on, boy!" The command was almost a threat, and Luke sped off at once, disappearing almost immediately in the gloom of the forest and the descending night.

Down, down the rocky Ridge path, over brush and brier and slippery stones he hurried, calling as he went that cry which always awakens a dreadful fear in the breast of the mountaineer, who understands all too well what it means to wander unguided and alone among those barren, snowcapped heights. That cry which awakens, as nothing can beside, his keenest interest, and enlists his broadest sympathy:

"Lost! Lost! Lost!"

Old men heard it and left their chimney corners to reach for the rifles above the kitchen doors. Old women heard it and left their griddles to blow a blast upon the horn that would announce the danger to the next listener. Children heard it, and forgot their supper smoking on their plates, to crowd about the doors with white faces, wondering about the child who was lost. Young maidens and young men, forgetting sex in sweet humanity, went forth together, one heart, one purpose, to rescue the perishing.

"Lost! Lost! Lost!"

Kit heard the cry as the young courier sped on; fainter and fainter it came to him, until at last he failed to hear it at all. Then he knew Luke was telling the story at the cabins as he passed along.

He could almost, he fancied, tell the very moment when he stopped at such or such a door. But he was not idle meanwhile; afraid to wander far from the spot lest he should be going farther from his sister, he spent the time in creeping in among the shadowy crevices, both of crag and brush, and searching as best he could in the darkness that was fast settling upon the Ridge.

More than once he called, thinking she might have fallen asleep.

"Jo! O Jo! Jo air a soun' sleeper," he told himself. "I hev' knowed dad ter sprinkle water out o' the gourd into her face mornin's. An' she must 'a' been mighty nigh fagged out with the tramp up the Ridge. Jo! O Jo!"

But, if asleep, the slumber was too deep to be broken by his call, and, heartsick and discouraged, Kit sat down upon a rock and buried his face in his hands. Lost! little Queenie; bright, peart, "sassy" little Queenie. It could n't be; she must be at home, safe in the cabin in the Hollow. Suddenly he bounded to his feet; he had heard that which told him emphatically and distinctly that she was not at home in the Hollow. It was a horn, a blast blown loud and clear three times — a pause,

and then the triple blast again. Everybody in the Hollow and along the mountain side knew that it meant danger of some kind; and Kit knew the response to the signal to be always immediate. Indeed while he listened there was an answer; another and another; then a shout, repeated and multiplied; and far down the Hollow a torch blazed out like a red meteor in the blackness of the night. In a moment others were lighted, and still others; the entire valley was awake, the wilderness ablaze with light.

"They hev' heard the news," said Kit, "an' they air formin'. I wonder ef dad knows — poor dad!"

He climbed upon the rocks, to the very tallest, and hallooed until he was hoarse, although he knew his voice was no more to that far-off band than the echo of a little brook singing among its yellow pebbles. Still he wanted to do something; he must do something or his heart would burst. When he listened again he knew the procession was making the ascent of the Ridge, for the cries came nearer and more distinct, and the horns were awaking the echoes adown the steep bluff's side.

Sweet sound, aye, music sweet as heaven's to his ears! Then there came another sound — a nearer,

clearer sound — a sound that sent the life-blood freezing to his heart, so full was it of horrible, fiendish suggestions. He scrambled down from the rocks to which he had climbed and stationed himself in the leaves; he could feel them in the darkness, crisp and crackling beneath his feet, the very bed of leaves in which he had placed his sister. Somehow he felt, he could not have told why, nearer to her in that empty nest of brown leaves, and his first thought when that hideous cry rang out upon the night was one of protection to Jo.

"Ef it hev' come fur her, mebbe it 'll take me instead," he told himself, and not once did the brave heart falter. "An' ef it hev' already tuk her, I 'd ruther it tuk me ez ter not."

He had heard the cry of a panther in a laurel brake near by.

Gabe Brady had kindled a lively fire in the big old fireplace.

"So 's ter hev' it homeful an' chairful 'g'inst the little gal gits back," he said as he drew up the big wooden rocker before the blaze and sat watching the sparks crackling about the red cedar with a saucy jubilance which served partly to amuse and partly to irritate him.

Gabe never felt quite comfortable when Jo was gone "on one o' them wil' tromps after Kit." And to-night, somehow, the saucy sparks seemed to be twitting him with her absence.

"Humph!" he said, "ye appears ter be sorter spiteful like ter-night, ye sholy do; air it because the little gal ain't here? She 's a-comin', lemme tell ye. An' she hev' got two eyes in that sassy head o' her 'n as 'll lay the best o' you-uns, ye imperdent sparkers ye, cla'r back inter the shade."

Still, for all his gay banter, Brady felt a trifle uneasy. He pushed his chair back and began to busy himself about the more stirring matters of the household; first he swung a black kettle to the iron hook suspended in the big black fireplace, and put some potatoes to roast, with their jackets on, in the hot ashes. Then he opened the door and looked out. The Hollow was shrouded in a dead-white mist. The sun had already set and a brisk, sharp breeze stirred the brown boughs of the oak and moaned in the melancholy pine trees. Gabe was restless.

"Hit air lonesome, shore now," he declared. "An' the wind do blow pitiful. I wish the little gal wuz in; I certainly do."

He went back to the fire and threw on another log. Then he noticed that the kettle had begun to hum. He listened a moment, then impulsively reached his hand and, lifting the pot from the hook, set it back upon the hearth.

"Ef ye can't sing no more chairfuller 'an that, ye kin take a back seat," he said. "I reck'n I knows the little gal ain't come, 'thout you-uns tellin' me."

Again he went to the door and looked out, instantly closed it and returned to the fire. His pipe lay on the shelf above the fireplace; he took it up mechanically, tapped it upon the jamb of the chimney, and watched, without seeing, the white ashes and half-burned tobacco drop upon the hearth. Then suddenly he remembered that it was Jo who always "tapped out the ashes," and Jo who always "crammed in the fixin's" when he wished to smoke. He replaced the pipe upon the shelf quickly as if it had unexpectedly stung him. As he did so the blaze from the great back log suddenly shot out its red tongue and, with a jubilant roar, licked the black back of the chimney with a kind of fiendish affection that made Brady almost forget his uneasiness in his irritation.

"An' what air you-uns a-jubileein' about?" he

demanded. "I declare ter goodness a man hev' got no say-so in his own house these days."

The next moment he laughed; the absurdity of the thing struck him, and he knew it was his own warped fancy and uneasy mind had given tongue to the inanimate objects about him.

"Ever'thing hev' gone crookety ter-night," he said, "all on account of the little sass-box not bein' here. I'm mightily afeared I ought not to 'a' let her go. Waal, ef she ain't here at home in a mighty, *mighty* short time, I'll go arter her."

"Go–ho–ho–ho!" roared the blaze, and Gabe stepped back in frightened astonishment.

"*Ye* need n't be jubileein' 'bout 'n it, Mr. Blaze," he said.

"She'd laugh peart'r 'n ye kin ter see her foolish ole dad a-traipsin' arter her."

"Go–oh–oh-oh!" It was the wind at the window.

"I'low I knows when ter go," said Gabe. "It do appear ez ef ever'thing wuz sot on advisin' ter-night, ez ef some'n' wuz ter pay sho enough."

"Go!"

A saucy spark snapped the command in his very face.

"One more tellin', an' I will," said Gabe. The stout heart of the man was weakening in the solicitude of the father, though he called himself "a fool," "a born'd idjit," and drew up the old rocking-chair again, threw himself into it, and, rocking slowly to and fro, listened eagerly and restlessly for the sound of the merry clatter that always preceded Jo's coming. But he could hear nothing save the rough rockers crossing the uneven boards.

"Go, G–a–b–e! Go, G–a–b–e!" With a quick emphatic jerk the sound of the rocking took form into words.

At that moment a rifle shot, another, and, with instantaneous rapidity, another rang out in sharp succession. He listened but an instant.

"Lost! Lost! Lost!"

The old, terrible cry that meant a face missing at some humble fireside.

Gabe sprang to his feet and jerked his rifle from the rack above the cabin door, lifted the latch, and stood face to face with Parson Tate.

For a moment neither spoke; each throat refused utterance to the terrible truth that lay heavy on each heart.

At length the preacher, for years the adviser and

a kind of oracle to the humble people of the Hollow, lifted his left hand and laid it upon Brady's shoulder. In his right he carried a torch, and a hunter's horn hung from his neck.

"My brother," he said, "the ways o' the Almighty air past findin' out, but his arm air strong ter deliver sech ez put their trust in him."

Brady staggered and leaned against the door; for a moment his limbs refused to bear his weight.

"By that word ye air meaning ter tell me ez it be my own little gal ez be lost, Parson Tate, air ye?" he asked.

A deep groan was the only answer, and Gabe strode out into the night, where the neighbors, with the quick sympathy that is characteristic of the mountain people, had congregated to join in a search for the lost child.

Parson Tate acted as director, and ordered each man to provide himself with a torch; when this had been done he led the procession toward the Ridge, rising, a gaunt and forbidding barrier, on the east boundary of Dark Hollow.

Men, women, and children, calling, shouting, firing of guns, and waving of torches, they scattered and spread in small squads over the Ridge. At

midnight Parson Tate blew a loud blast upon the hunter's horn hung about his neck and summoned the unsuccessful searchers again at the foot of the Ridge. Doubt was distinct on every face lit up by the blazing torches that turned away from the tearless grief of the stricken father.

"Go home, Gabe; ye air all onfitten ter be out 'n the night, an' we-uns kin do all ther' 's to do. Go home, Gabe."

A friendly neighbor tendered the advice. Gabe slowly shook his head.

"An' leave the b'ars, an' painters, an' wil' varmints to eat my little gal?" he asked.

"The light 'll skeer the wil' things off," said one of the men. "You-uns better go home an' rest afore the fire."

"I ain't honin' fur rest an' sech," said Gabe, "whilst my little gal air mebbe freezin', *freezin'!* O Lord! ter think o' my poor little gal a-freezin' on the mount'n." And the poor man dropped his face in his hands and wept.

He no longer resisted when one of the neighbors gently but firmly put his arm in his and led him away to the lonely cabin in the Hollow. Meanwhile the search went on.

Parson Tate formed the people in a line leading up the Ridge; a man stood at the foot; twenty yards further up another was stationed, then, another and another, each twenty yards apart, until the last man stood at the top of the Ridge.

At a given signal, passed from lip to lip, the column moved slowly southward, each head bowed, each torch ablaze, thrust now and then into suspicious-looking hollows. Scarcely a word was spoken as the melancholy march went on, until at last a dull-gray line stretched across the eastern horizon. The gray line grew to a silver shimmer; a mantle spread across the heavens that were alive with the new day. The torches were extinguished and the sun rose to light the tireless watchers across the mountain. Two hours more of daylight passed and yet no trace of the lost child. The stoutest heart among them grew hopeless; rough hands were continually brushing off the tears that rolled down rougher cheeks. The word passed up the column to turn, and sadly the sympathetic hearts obeyed, slowly retracing their steps over the lonely Ridge.

The saddest among them all was Kit; he had walked all night, keeping always ahead of the

others. Six o'clock found him again at the spot where he had left Jo to watch the birdtrap; there was the nest of brown leaves as he had fashioned it — the empty nest; he thrust the leaves aside with his foot as if he half-hoped to find beneath them Jo.

"'T ain't no use, nohow," he said to himself. "I've s'arched ther' fifty times an' better."

Nevertheless she stooped and peered carefully into the farthest recesses of the alcove. Nothing but emptiness; he expected it, yet he was disappointed. He was about to turn away in despair when a brown object appeared, emerging from behind the standing flat rock. Kit grasped his rifle, that he still carried, but dropped it as a saucy voice, that he knew could belong to no human being living except Jo, called to him: —

"Did you-uns shoot a b'ar, Kit?"

As calm and as unconcerned as if Kit had just returned from yesterday's hunt. The boy was startled almost out of his senses; he believed for a moment that it was Jo's spirit, and his first impulse was to run away from it.

Instead, however, of doing that he put his hands to his lips, making a kind of trumpet, and called loudly, "Come here!" A man at the foot of the

GABE BRADY ADVANCED TO MEET THEM.

advancing column of searchers heard the boy's cry and repeated it instantly and loudly, "Come here!" It passed to the next man and the next, "Come here!" "Come here!" "Come here!" It was little more than an echo when it reached the last man, and the entire column, man by man, as he sent his command to the next one, hurried down to the cave's mouth where Jo sat laughing at their wonder, and demanding, "Wher' air dad?"

They bore her home on their shoulders amid the noise of guns and shouting and rejoicing. She was a kind of hero that day, and she laughed and buried her fingers in Parson Tate's woolly hair as she sat upon the old man's shoulder.

The procession halted at the threshold of the cabin in the Hollow. The door opened and Gabe Brady advanced to meet them. Parson Tate stepped forward and lifted his burden from his shoulders.

"My brother, the Lord air merciful an' full o' tender compassion. The lost air found." And he placed Jo in Gabe's outstretched arms.

Where had she been? She could not tell it all, for laughing.

"Fur away some'r's," she said; "mighty fur, wher'

it wuz all warm an' sunshiny, an' the birds talked like folkses, an' the flowers talked out loud."

All winter, indeed, Jo delighted to tell of that wonderful night on Middle Ridge. Every evening in the little chair by the chimney corner she would repeat the story of that strange land which she had visited. And at the close of each recital, for neither Gabe nor Kit ever wearied of the story, Brady would declare: —

"'T ware a mighty big dream o' your'n, ez ye dreamt in that ther' cave, Queenie. A sholy mighty big dream."

And Jo would chuckle and show her white, kittenlike teeth as she glanced roguishly at Kit across the hearth.

"Did n't no painter eat me, nuther; now, did it, Kit?"

"But," said Brady, "it sholy ware a oncommon big dream."

TAMED.

BY

WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

TAMED.

"THANK you, Mr. Holbrook," she said, "but I'm not going to the county fair to-morrow. Which of those horses did you say was Kick?"

She was not looking at his face or she might have seen how all but savage was the silent comment in it that the subject of conversation had been changed with dreadful suddenness.

He replied aloud: —

"Kick? Oh, he is that horse away over yonder, beyond the others. He isn't like any other horse that we ever had. He's as ugly as sin. You can't do anything with him. I'm really sorry" —

"Is he so very terrible?" She interrupted him as if the character of that animal were a matter of deep interest to her.

"He is vicious," responded the young man with somewhat needless energy. "It isn't easy to keep him in even in winter. The county fair" —

"Kick, Kick, come here!" called out the girl who was making such particular inquiries about him.

"No use!" exclaimed Mr. Holbrook, and he may or may not have referred entirely to the quadruped, but he added: "Why, Miss Granger, he has thrown every man on the place."

She had evidently no reply to make to so stunning a statement as that.

The quadruped subject of his criticisms had indeed a wild look, and his chestnut coat — Mr. Holbrook's was of very neat blue flannel — did not seem to have ever been made acquainted with currycomb or brush. At that moment he threw up his heels with a sharp whinny and put another dozen or so of yards between himself and the house-yard fence behind which they were standing. He looked at them intently, and Miss Granger continued to gaze very studiously at him, but Mr. Holbrook turned suddenly and walked away with a half-audible remark about — about nothing in particular. Perhaps he had duties on his hand; but half an hour later he was standing in front of the bars which connected the Holbrook pasture-lot with what he spoke of as "the rock lot" of the Granger farm adjoining. He was staring at the bars, but his mind may have been disturbed or preoccupied, for he seemed not to

notice that the upper bar had been carelessly left down.

"I did think," he said to himself, "that I could fix it all up. It 's rough! I meant to take Harma Granger to the fair, but if she won't, she won't. No use! And her aunt says she 's going back to the city at the end of the week!"

He turned away toward the village of barns, large and small, behind the Holbrook house, but if he had been in front of the rock-lot bars ten minutes later he might have seen Kick standing in an attitude of deliberation, scratching a small hollow in the earth with his right fore-hoof and considering the unwonted absence of the top bar.

There was a curveting around in front of the bars for a full half-minute as if Kick were experimenting upon the springs in his legs, and then he made a run toward the diminished barrier which had hitherto pinned him in.

It was well done, that splendid flying leap, and away he galloped, out of sight, before one of old Colonel Holbrook's men, on his evening tour of inspection, came along and put up the missing bar.

Kick had a grand time in the Granger lot for an

hour and a half after his escape over the bars. He went all around that new country, along every fence and into every corner, and he discovered that he had it all to himself. Not another horse was there, nor any other beast of the field, to dispute with him the right of possession. He was free, delightfully free, but one of the most important of the discoveries he made was that he had not tasted a drop of water since early that morning, and that there was not any to be had in the Granger lot.

Darkness came down over all at last, and he began to experience also a new and strange sensation of loneliness. The night came on, hot and dry, without any dew, and every time Kick lay down and rolled over and tried to sleep he found himself tempted to dream of the log water-trough, into which a cool stream was always running, in the Holbrook stable-yard. He was up before the sun next morning, but he found that the short, withered grass and mullein stalks and sorrel of that pasture were of no account whatever. As the hours went by and the sun climbed higher, it seemed to Kick as if the air he breathed grew hotter, while everything around him and within him was getting dryer.

His head drooped, his tail drooped, his spirits drooped; he had not enough of wild life left in him to curvet or to prance, and late in the afternoon he walked slowly along the north fence as if he were not himself at all, but altogether another horse. Walking in that direction, however, brought him nearer and nearer to the Granger farmyard, with its inviting barns, and thus, farther on, to the house-yard and all the shady trees and the shrubbery.

There was a green, cool look on the grass when he looked so wistfully over the fence, but at first he did not appear to take any interest in anything in particular.

From one of the lower branches of a tree in the front yard, however, to a lower branch of another tree stretched a hammock, and in that hammock lay a girl with a pamphlet in her hand. Her other hand had held a paper-cutter, until she fell asleep and dropped it on the grass, but she had unconsciously clung to the magazine.

"That 's the same girl," said Kick to himself after a little reflection, "that I saw Henry Holbrook talking to yesterday. I don't care. I 've thrown him."

He stood and stared at her and then, he hardly knew why, he whinnied loudly.

The sound of his voice startled her and in another moment she was on her feet, walking toward him.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "how did you get here? Why, it's Kick. It's the one that's so savage."

She walked close up to him and very cautiously she put out a white hand and patted his face, and he did his best to tell her that he liked it. She patted him again and again, saying several pleasant and complimentary things while she did so.

"Why, Kick," she remarked at last, "you don't seem to be wild at all. You're a lovely horse. Do you want some water?" and then she added: "Why, of course he does, this blazing, hot day!"

She found a tin basin on the platform by the pump and she filled it and brought it while he stood with his head over the fence and watched her. Anybody who did not consider Harma a pretty girl should have been there to see her pumping water and carrying it to Kick.

"Hurrah!" he exclaimed, partly to himself and partly aloud, "she understands me!"

It sounded to Harma like a prolonged whinny of

eagerness and delight, and the basin was drained in a twinkling. His very eyes seemed to ask her for more, and his heart went out to her unreservedly as he saw her hurry to the pump and hurry back to hold the basin up to him again. Then she brought him a piece of bread, three or four pieces, and an apple and a lump of sugar, and all the while she was remarking, —

"Why, he's as good as he can be! He's a splendid fellow. So gentle, too."

At last another idea came to her.

"Come along, Kick," she said, "I'm going to open the gate."

She walked rapidly away in the direction of the barnyard, and Kick followed her along the fence as if he had been a dog that belonged to her. Neither of them knew that all of their proceedings had been watched, but now there broke out an excited bit of conversation at one of the open windows of the house.

"Aunt Betty!" exclaimed a shrill, young voice, "what's Harma going to do with Kick? Oh! oh! He'll kill her!"

"Polly!" replied aunt Betty. "Why, she's crazy! He's a pesky, dangerous brute. Come

right along with me, Polly. He 's a biter. How I do wish some of the men were at home ! "

They were too late to stop Harma. She had opened the barnyard gate and Kick had walked in before they were out of the house. He whinnied very affectionately to Harma, but he walked straight through the barnyard into the house-yard, and he did not stand still until he reached the pump. Harma went along with him, but aunt Betty and Polly ran as if he were after them. Probably not many people who knew aunt Betty believed that she could run. As for Polly, she screamed as she ran, till they reached the back doorstep, and she looked as if she were about to begin again when aunt Betty whispered to her : —

" Polly — puff — Polly ! We 'd best be — puff — quiet, and not — puff — rile him up."

" Why, aunt Betty," called out Harma just then, " he is n't wild at all. He 's as tame as a kitten. Polly, dear, get me another piece of bread for him, please."

The bread was brought while Harma was pumping more water for Kick, and Polly put it down on the pump platform and ran away as fast as she could out of Kick's reach.

"He 'll bite you, Harma!" she exclaimed as soon as she felt safe enough to speak.

"If I had a bridle, now" said Harma, very much as if she were studying some tremendous impossibility.

"Bridle?" said aunt Betty, staring at her. "Why, he 's never had a bridle on him. Leastwise if they did get one on, he did n't let 'em keep it on."

"Aunt Betty," said Harma earnestly, "I don't care! If I had a bridle here, I 'd try."

"I 'll get one! I 'll get one!" exclaimed aunt Betty as if a sudden fit of desperate determination had seized her. "I 'd like to see it done, but I won't come a-nigh that critter!"

She went for it and she brought it, and all the while Harma continued in conversation with Kick. As for him he had drunk more water, his mind was full of pleasant impressions, and when Harma held up the bridle he said to himself: —

"Of course I 'll open my mouth for her any time. She won't hurt me. I can't say I like it, but she may put it on."

"Harma," said Polly, "here 's a blanket and a surcingle, if you 'll just come and get them. I da'sn't come any nearer."

It was a gay red blanket and the surcingle was new and bright colored. Harma folded the blanket and Kick put out his head and smelled of it, and then she laid it on his back and he stood as still as a mouse while she arranged it in its place. She made complimentary remarks to him all the while, and he was particularly well pleased with her tone of voice.

"I 'm dreadful 'fraid to have you reach under him," said aunt Betty. "He might kill you quick as a wink."

There was a flash in Harma's eyes and a resolute expression on her lips, but she said nothing. She did reach under and catch the other end of that long band, pull it tight, put it through the buckle, and draw it as hard as she could.

"I 'd really like to roll," thought Kick, "but I won't this time."

"Harmy, Harmy! Sakes alive! What are you going to do now?" screamed aunt Betty. "Where are you a-leadin' that vicious beast? You don't mean to tell me that you 're goin' to try and ride him?"

Harma was walking toward a big box that stood in the side-yard, and Kick was doing the same thing,

without any orders. When she stood still he stood still. She stepped up upon the box, and he only gave a gratified whinny when she sat down upon his blanketed back.

They watched her breathlessly while he very quietly walked around the yard, and Harma's confidence in him and in herself came to her so keenly that she laughed aloud.

The front gate, the wagon gate, was wide open, and Kick passed out through it just as several wagons and a couple of men on horseback came up the road. The two on horseback were Henry Holbrook and one of his men. Neither of them said anything for a moment, but old Colonel Holbrook stood right up in his wagon.

"He'll kill her!" he said in a low, hoarse voice, and then he shouted: "Keep back, Barney! Don't you go near 'em! Harry, you ride alongside and see if you can't get her out of that scrape. It's awful!"

"Harma! Harma!" half-whispered Henry as he rode up by her, and she saw that his face was very pale, "for heaven's sake, be careful."

His hurried exclamation seemed to have a pang of pain in it, but it was called out by a gentle curvet

and an uneasy whinny from Kick. He was not now walking, for he could not perfectly control his feelings, but the canter he indulged in was wonderfully easy to his rider. All that Henry Holbrook could do was to let his own horse canter alongside and to watch Harma, in an agony of fear as to what might come next. His face told a great deal more than if he had spoken.

"Kick has made friends with me," said Harma. "Don't you see that he has? You need not feel any fear about me. Oh!" — for Kick curveted beautifully just then.

"There!" said Henry, with quick changes of color as Kick quieted again. "Harma" —

"I wish I had a side-saddle," she interrupted him, "and a riding habit. I must n't go any farther now, Kick. You will have to carry me home."

He obeyed the light touch of the rein and turned and conveyed her straight to the big box in the Granger side-yard.

"I 'll help you dismount," began Henry; but Harma stepped off at once and began to caress Kick.

"Hurrah!" shouted the deep voice of Colonel

Holbrook, a little behind them. "If she has n't done it!"

His wrinkled face was beaming and glowing as he added: —

"Harma, Kick is your own horse, that is, if he 'll stay tamed."

"Thank you, colonel!" she exclaimed. "Oh, thank you! He is such a beautiful creature! Is he really mine?" and she positively put her arms around the neck of that dreadful colt.

Henry Holbrook made a forward step at that moment, but his apparent attempt at an approach was greeted by a fierce nicker and an ominous putting back of Kick's ears.

"I 've got to keep away, have I?" said Henry with a deep flush of mortification upon his handsome face.

"Kick! Kick!" said Harma reproachfully, "make friends with him, won't you?"

Kick stood as still as a post for a moment, and all the muscles of his body seemed to be stiffening and hardening.

"He's gettin' ready for a bolt!" growled the man with Henry. "Look out for 'im!"

"No, he won't, Henry," said Harma. "You don't know how gentle and quiet he really is."

That was true; Henry did n't know, nor did Kick himself, nor anybody that had been acquainted with him, but he remained motionless, his ears back and the whites of his eyes showing. He saw Harma take one of Henry's hands in one of hers and bring it closer and closer to his face. Then the two hands patted him, in a sort of partnership which altogether astonished him. So at the same time did the voice of the young man, for it grew wonderfully sort and winning as it spoke to him, and there was a tone in it like something that Kick had noticed in the voice of Harma.

Henry Holbrook knew a great deal about horses and he pushed his new acquaintance judiciously. Kick felt more and more as if the young man were getting tamed somehow, while Harma talked to her new pet and told him that he was to remain with her. Perhaps Kick did not at first quite understand his good fortune, but he began to do so when she led him away toward the barn. When she reached it she took his bridle off, put a halter on, tied him in a stall, put liberal oats into the trough before him, threw down straw for him to lie on, and patted him good night.

Henry Holbrook was with her, helping her and

telling her what to do, and Kick found himself more than a little puzzled about their voices. It seemed to him that their tones blended and mingled and had the same thrilling unaccountable tremor in them, and it affected him powerfully.

"Harma!" exclaimed Henry at that moment, "you have taught me what love can do."

Kick heard that, but he did not quite understand what Henry went on to say. He listened in vain, for they were away back of the stall near the barn door.

"Harma," said Henry at last, "I am as thirsty, as wretched, as utterly miserable, as he was, and maybe I need taming as badly. Can't you try a little kindness on me?"

Kick answered with a loud, anxious whinny and an effort to turn around in his stall and see what was going on, and it was Henry who at once replied to him: —

"It 's all right, Kick, old fellow! It 's all right!"

Kick was entirely satisfied, for he heard Harma murmur, "Yes," and in a moment more he was alone.

AN UNCONSCIOUS HERO.

BY

M. A. C. WILLARD.

AN UNCONSCIOUS HERO.

NOW, Ik, here you are again, working for us when you ought to be attending to your own place," remonstrated Mrs. Harold.

Ik, startled, scrambled up from his kneeling posture, jerking his excuse for a hat from his kinky head, and stood before his former mistress with a countenance indicative of having been caught in the midst of unworthy deeds, a quaint, shabby, ungainly figure in garments that defy my feeble descriptive powers, an unmistakable son of darkest Africa, of uncertain age and indescribable personality.

"Ef you please, Mis' Mary," said he with look and tone expressive of profound apology, "I was jest a-weedin' Miss Nell's pansy blossoms. Dey's choked up wid de grass, dey is, and needs 'tention mighty bad, dey does."

"So they do, Ik. And so does everything else about the place. However," she added with a sigh, "unless I manage better in the future than I have in the past, I will soon have no claim upon it."

"Whot dat you sayin', Mis' Mary?" asked Ik, lifting his head quickly. "Ain't gwine to sell de ole place, is you, mist'ess?"

"Sell it, Ik! Don't you remember Mr. Grimsby's mortgage?"

"I 'members it, mist'ess, well enough," responded Ik with deep dejection, dropping his head again and moving uneasily from one foot to the other, "but I t'ought dat bus'ness done been 'ranged long o' Mars' Philip an' Mars' Grimsby."

"So it was for a time, Ik, but another payment — the last payment — will be due on the last day of this month, and unless I can meet that payment promptly, Mr. Grimsby declares the old place must go."

"Can't Mars' Phil?" began Ik anxiously.

"No," said Mrs. Harold. "He has done all that he could as a lawyer and as a friend for us, and he can do no more. He is a poor man himself, and he has a large family of his own. Five hundred dollars is not easy to get these days, Ik," with a faint smile.

Ik looked up quickly again.

"Five hundred dollars, Mis' Mary?"

"Yes, Ik, five hundred dollars. And if I could

pay it the old place would be my own again, and with a little help I could soon have it in good condition and be comfortable once more, Ik, and put Miss Nell at school and be able to help you and Martha along. You have done so much for us!"

"Five hundred dollars!" repeated Ik again thoughtfully, anxiously. Then with a quaver in his humble tones: "As to me an' Marthy, mist'ess, whot's me an' Marthy done for you? Whar'd we be only fer you and my marster dat 's dead? Didn't he give us dat place of our 'n and sot us bofe free long 'fore freedom come and kered for us an' helped us long as he lived? Mist'ess, you done forgot all dat."

"No, Ik, and I have n't forgotten all your faithful service to your master, and to me since your master died, and I am not likely to forget. You deserve a great deal more than you ever have received or ever will receive."

Ik shook his head, drew his hand across his eyes, and opened his lips twice in unavailing effort to articulate some sort of protest.

"Well, well, Ik," said Mrs. Harold gently, "perhaps things will come out all right somehow.

We 'll try to make the best of them in any case. How is Martha to-day?"

"Fa'rly, mist'ess, fa'rly. Dat ile you sont her holped her rheum'tism might'ly."

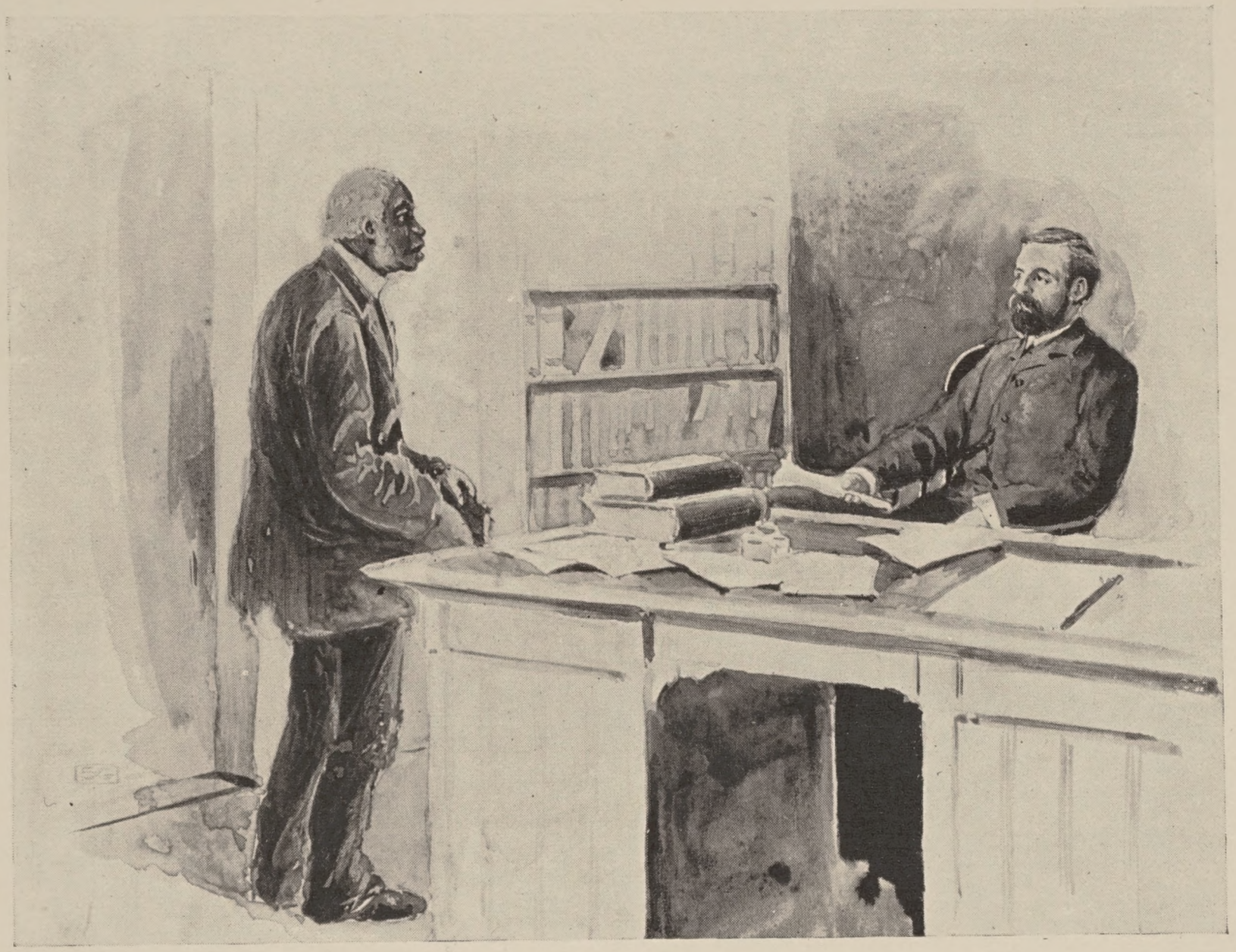
"I am glad to hear it, Ik. I 'll go down to see her in the morning; I sent Nell down to-day."

"T'ank you, mist'ess; I lef' Miss Nell dar when I come up here dis arternoon. Is you gwine to de sto', Mis' Mary? Let me go fer you?"

"No," said Mrs. Harold, moving away down the garden path, "I am going to see Lawyer Graves. See that Miss Nell comes home before dark, Ik."

She walked slowly on and Ike stood still and stared after her thoughtfully but vaguely.

"Five hundred dollars!" muttered he. "An' she 's got to hab it by de las' of dis mont', and dis is de middle! Five hundred dollars! An' to t'ink I 'members de time when marster t'ought nothin' o' spendin' five thousan' dollars, and when dat same ole Grimsby 'd a-been in de po' house, long o' his kin', ef it had n't a-been fer my marster, an' now he trying to take de roof from over my mist'ess' head. Him dat ain't no better 'n de dus' under her foots!" and Ik fell upon his knees again, and began an



"EF YOU PLEASE, MARS' PHIL."

unnecessarily savage onslaught upon the fresh green grass among Nell's pansy blossoms.

"Ef you please, Mars' Phil!"

"Well, Isaac," said Lawyer Graves, turning from his desk and looking kindly and inquiringly at his sable visitor who stood hesitatingly half in and half out of the office door, "come in. What can I do for you? A message from Mrs. Harold?"

"No, sah," said Ik, approaching to within a few yards of the lawyer and pausing abruptly, shifting from his right foot to his left as he stood, and twisting his old hat unmercifully with his two coal-black, nervous hands. "I 's come on a little bus'ness o' my own dis mornin', sah."

"Business of your own, eh, Ik? Well, out with it, old man. Let us hear what it is."

"Ef you please, Mars' Phil," said Ik, hesitating and doubtful, "I — I 's sole my place, sah!"

"Sold your place!" exclaimed the lawyer, astonished. "Why, Isaac, what possessed you? Mr. Harvey told me two months ago that you refused a good offer from him!"

"So I did, Mars' Phil, so I did, sah! but — but — I 's sole it to him now. You see, Mars' Phil, it was

j'inin' o' dat fiel' o' his 'n an' he wanted it mighty bad," added Ik apologetically.

"I see, Ik. But what do you want to do? What do you want me to do for you? You are not going to leave the country, I hope?"

"No, sah, I ain't no sech notion as dat. You see, Mars' Phil, sah," continued Ik, shifting uneasily and staring down at the persecuted hat in his restless hands, "I was kinder tired like, livin' in one place so long, an' I 'cluded 't would be de bes' for me an' Marthy to live nigher de big house. Dere 's a little bit of a shanty in de backyard by de kitchen dat Mis' Mary 'll let us have till, till sumudder 'rangements kin be made, and we 'll be nigh enough to help Mist'ess and Miss Nell more 'n we does now, an'" —

"Ik," interrupted Lawyer Graves, "does Mrs. Harold know you have sold your place?"

"No, sah," responded Ik with evident reluctance.

"It was a nice place, Isaac, and you were very comfortably fixed. A very nice place."

"So 't was, Mars' Phil. So 't was, sah!" assented Ik eagerly. "Marster holped me 'long wid it, an' holped me to pay fer de house, an' — an' — but Mars' Harvy wanted it powerful bad, an'" —

"How much did he pay you for it, Ik?"

"Seven hundred an' fifty dollars, Mars' Phil; more 'n he offered me at fu'st. An' so," continued Ik, still bent upon apologizing for the disposal of his own lawful property, "I 'cluded to sell out and live nigher de big house an' keep Mis' Mary an'" —

"But, Isaac," said Lawyer Graves, "do you know that within a week's time, in all probability, Mis' Mary will no longer have any claim upon the big house? You ought to have consulted her before you sold your place. You are better off to-day than your old mistress, Isaac. I 've worked hard to set things straight, but I don't see any help for her. What are you going to do with your seven hundred and fifty dollars, Ik? If" — he stopped abruptly and looked hard at the shambling, awkward, uneasy figure, looked so hard and searchingly that the anxious, wistful eyes fell beneath his gaze.

"In a week's time, did you say, Mars' Phil, sah?"

"In less than a week's time, Isaac, your old mistress and her daughter will be houseless and homeless, as far as I can see to the contrary."

"Mars' Phil," stammered Ik hurriedly, still looking down and crushing the shapeless mass in his hands, "I done come here dis mornin' to tell you — to ax you — to — but I dunno how to go 'bout it. Me 'n Marthy wuz thinkin', Mars' Phil, could n't you — could n't some white gem'man" —

"Isaac!" shouted Lawyer Graves, springing to his feet, grasping Ik's shoulder and shaking him till his teeth chattered and his unfortunate rag of a hat fell from his trembling hands. "What have you done? What have you done?"

"Mars' Phil!" uttered Ik in frightened tones, shrinking from the lawyer's grasp, "'deed, Mars' Phil, I did n't mean no harm. I did n't mean my mistress to know de money come f'um me! She tole me, you tole me, Mars' Phil, sah, dat de money could n't be got nohow, an' we could n't b'ar, me an' Marthy, to see de ole place go like dat, an' so — an' so — O Mars' Phil, sah, 'deed I did n't mean no harm!"

"Harm!" cried the lawyer with shining eyes and unsteady lips, "Isaac! Isaac! You have done what the noblest gentleman in the land might be proud of having done, what not one 'white gem'man' in a million would think of doing! You

have sold the roof from over your head; you, in your old age, have thrown yourself out of house and home to — O Ik! Ik!"

"You 'll do it then, Mars' Phil!" cried Ik, eager and excited, approaching the lawyer as he sank back into his chair and touching his hand with the tip of his black finger; "you 'll save de ole place an' never let 'em know; min' dat, Mars' Phil! — never let 'em know whar de money come f'um."

"I 'll do it, Ik; who would n't do it? But after it 's done. Where 's your money, Isaac?"

"Here, right here, Mars' Phil!" and drawing an old stocking from hidden depths somewhere about his person, Ik emptied its contents into the lawyer's hands.

"Isaac! Isaac!" said Lawyer Graves, "give that stocking to me. I 'll keep it so long as there 's a shred of it left, and who else will be able to show a like souvenir? Who else will be able to tell a story such as I can and will tell? There 's two hundred and fifty dollars I 'll put down to your credit till you call for it. That 's over and above the five hundred, you know. There 's something else written against your name in a mighty book, Isaac — but I 'm talking Greek to you! Go along

and tell Mrs. Harold I must see her immediately and that I have good news for her. But, no ; send Grimsby here ; I 'll settle with Grimsby first and then I 'll see her."

And Ik, with beatified countenance, picked up his disreputable headgear and shuffled off as fast as his feet in their ragged coverings could carry him.

"Ik! Ik!" cried Mrs. Harold in broken tones. The shambling, awkward, ungainly figure stood before her in her own room, nervously turning and twisting that disgraceful hat, his manner the manner of a culprit called to account for dire misdeeds.

"Ef you please, Mis' Mary, Mars' Phil — he promised not to tole you, he did," muttered Ik in the lowest depths of humiliation and confusion.

"O Isaac! Isaac! I don't know what to do for you, I don't know what to say to you!" continued Mrs. Harold. "How dared you do such a thing? How dared you think of it? But, O Ik! Ik! I 'm glad to know that there 's such a creature in the world! You don't know, you can't know, what you have saved us from, what you have done for us, Isaac ; but some day you shall have a home of

your own again, you and Martha. And some day, Ik, some day, when you meet your dead master face to face in a better world" —

Ik lifted a suddenly glorified face. "Dat's whot I's hopin' an' tryin' fer, mistress," he whispered under his breath, "to meet my marster some day in dat better world. 'T ain't so fer away, Mis' Mary, dat day, an' when I meets 'em dar, Mars' Guy, an' my heabenly Marster, I wants to feel dat I can look 'em bofe in de face widout fear an' tremblin'. Dat's whot I's hopin' an' tryin' fer, mistress;" and turning away he shambled softly from the room and back to Nell's flower-beds, wholly unconscious of the heroism and self-sacrifice embodied in the deed he had done; mindful only of, thankful only for, in the simple, humble, unthinking ignorance of his untaught African soul, the fact that the old home of his dead master was safe once more in the possession of those who loved and honored it for that dead master's sake.

THE POWDER MONKEY.

BY

JANE G. AUSTIN.

THE POWDER MONKEY.

CAN'T I go ashore with you, father? Bart Allerton and Giles Hopkins are going and so is" —

"And so might you, Jack Billington, if you were n't the worst boy aboard the Mayflower. Where 's your mother's cat? Tell me that, my lad."

Jack Billington hung his head for a moment, but then, twisting his mouth to keep down a saucy smile, replied: —

"Mayhap she 's gone ashore, father, and if you 'll let me come with you, I 'll hunt for her."

But a backhander cuff upon the ear changed the grin of fun into one of pain, and the boy retreated toward the cabin stairs, followed by his father's growl.

"Mind you, sirrah, unless you mend your manners, you *shall* go ashore with me. There 's many a good rod growing on yonder trees."

"Come, Billington; jump in, man, and let 's be off!" shouted a voice from the boat, and Billington,

an ill-looking thickset man, about forty years old, clumsily lowered himself over the ship's side, axe in hand, and was presently seen wading with his six companions through the shallow, icy water lying upon the coast of Cape Cod.

For this ship was the famous Mayflower and these men were the Pilgrims, and the time was November, 1620, when the Mayflower had just completed her voyage of sixty-seven days from Plymouth in old England, and had not yet reached her destined port of Plymouth in New England.

Boats had been sent ashore several times for fresh water and fuel, and on this day the women of the Mayflower had landed with great budgets of soiled clothing, to do their family wash in a little pond of fresh water close to the shore, while the men followed after, both to cut wood and to protect their wives and daughters in case of an attack from the Indians.

Mrs. Billington was one of the laundresses, and her husband, as we have seen, was one of the woodcutters. They were neither of them very good people, and never would have been among the Pilgrims had not some treacherous agents smuggled them on board the Mayflower without the knowledge of the leaders.

Perhaps the want of a good example and training may be some excuse for the evil behavior of the children of this couple, but it is certain that John and Francis Billington were the two worst boys in the whole company and were always either doing some mischief or being punished for it; and in those days children got a good deal more of the attentions recommended by Solomon than they do now.

"I just wish I was as big as dad. I'd serve him out," muttered Jack, stamping down into the cabin so noisily that several persons sitting around the stove in the middle of the room looked up, and Elder Brewster sternly said: —

"Less noise would be more mannerly, young sir. What do you want in the cabin this bright morning? Why did not you go ashore with your father and the rest?"

"Daddy would n't have me," replied Jack sullenly, although pulling off his knit cap and scraping his foot backward on the floor while making a clumsy bow to the elder and to Governor Carver, with whom he was looking over a chart of the harbor as laid down by Champlain in 1605. This map, rude as it was, proved of the greatest help to the Pilgrims, as did also one made in 1614 by Captain

John Smith, who gave the name of Plymouth to the spot where the Pilgrims were finally to land.

So it was upon a very important consultation that Jack Billington so rudely intruded, and although the elder and the governor said nothing more to him, and pale Mrs. Hopkins, with her sleeping baby on her knee, only looked at him, the boy felt that he was not wanted there and presently slunk away into the stateroom or, as they called it, the sleeping cabin occupied by his parents, his brother, and himself.

Here a most exciting and fascinating opportunity for mischief presented itself and Jack's little gray eyes fairly snapped with delight as he espied it.

His father, hurrying to make ready for the boat, had taken down both his fowling-piece and carbine from the hooks where they generally hung, well out of the reach of the boys, and, after loading both pieces and slinging the carbine about his shoulders, had left the fowling-piece lying in one of the berths. More than this, he had unheaded the keg of powder usually locked up in his chest, and in his haste to fill his powder-horn had scattered a good deal upon the floor and left the keg, with its cover only laid on, standing beside the open chest.

"Less noise would be more mannerly, Young Sir."

"Hokey-pokey!" exclaimed Jack under his breath; and turning to the stateroom door he softly closed it and slipped the bolt.

"My eye, Betty Martin, won't I have some fun!" again remarked Jack delightedly, conscious that he was using "swear-words" and feeling very big and bad indeed.

"If dad just knew!" murmured he again; and emptying his pockets of a lot of string, a peg top, an old knife, some marbles, and a lot of other treasures, not including a pocket-handkerchief, he replaced them with powder, filling the pockets to the brim and giving himself the appearance of a bumblebee with a full load of honey. Having laid in this store for future use, Jack sat down upon the floor to fully enjoy the present feast and resolved first of all to make some squibs with which to frighten the girls and women, or to tie to the tails of dogs and cats when it could be done without too much risk of being found out.

"Got to have some paper," muttered Jack with a dogged air that showed he was resolved upon some new piece of naughtiness; and rummaging in the chest he dragged up an old Bible with wooden covers and great brass clasps. It was the only book

owned by the Billington family, but, as not one of them knew how to read, it was seldom open although much valued by Mrs. Billington, to whom it had been given as a wedding present; and a really valuable one it was, for books were in those days scarce and dear. Turning the leaves with a practised hand — for he had done this thing before — the boy selected four, at considerable distances apart, and tore them out as smoothly as possible, and divided each in halves. Then, replacing the Bible and closing the chest, he proceeded to make his squibs, laying a string in each to act as a slow match.

"Guess one of these 'll make that stuck-up prig, Conny Hopkins, jump!" chuckled he, stowing away the squibs in his breast and cutting a double shuffle of delight.

But as the nails in his clumsy shoes rasped the grains of powder upon the floor, they struck fire in a dozen little explosions which at first startled and then delighted the boy, who, it must be confessed, did not lack for that reckless courage which leads some people into great folly and some into brilliant successes.

Scraping the scattered powder into a mound, and inserting a bit of string in the top by way of fun,

he stood up and regarded the effect with the same sort of joy felt by an artist as he views his completed picture.

"'T is all one with that burning mountain Bill Ely tells of seeing when he went down the coast of Italy," muttered he with a certain awe chilling the enthusiasm of his mood. But this lasted only for a moment, and in the next Jack's only anxiety was how he should procure fire to set off his volcano, for this, let me remind you, was before the days of parlor matches or even of those splinters dipped in phosphorus which were the ancestors of parlor matches. No, the only way in which Jack Billington had ever seen fire obtained was by striking a flint stone and piece of steel together, and catching the sparks upon tinder or some very dry and inflammable shavings or leaves; and he, poor boy! had neither flint nor steel in his possession.

But as those snapping little eyes of his roamed around the stateroom, considering what could be made of use in this emergency, they fell upon the fowling-piece still lying in the berth, and a flush of joy mounted to his freckled cheeks.

Of course! oh, yes, that was exactly what he wanted!

Had n't he more than once seen his father get a fire by snapping his gun and catching the sparks that fell from the lighted powder upon his tinder?

Of course if these sparks fell upon more powder they would set it off without tinder, and the "piece" and the volcano together would make such a delightful explosion as no boy aboard the Mayflower had ever yet heard.

"Guess Bart Allerton and Giles Hopkins' eyes would stand out if they could see it," muttered Jack, turning toward the door, and then remembering that both those big boys had gone ashore with the men, and in any case Master Jack did not care to face the authorities seated in the great cabin, as he must to reach the deck.

So, resigning the glory of an admiring spectator, Jack patted his volcano into a little more elegance of form, laid his bit of fuse carefully across the top, without reflecting that gunpowder hardly needs a string to ignite it, if the sparks fall directly upon it, and then striding across it seized the fowling-piece as it innocently lay upon his mother's pillow. As he grasped it a certain tingling thrill ran down his fingers to his shoulders, which almost unconsciously screwed themselves around in their jackets, dimly

remembering the whistling cuts that had descended upon them from the ramrod of that same gun when Jack had been found fingering it once before.

"He can't more than flog me though, and I'll risk it," murmured Jack; and, rather nervously raising the gun to his shoulder, he fortunately turned the muzzle shoreward and pulled the trigger.

The explosion was simply awful!

Pent up in that little cabin and augmented by the explosion of one of the fuses, which in some way or another fell out of the boy's shirt bosom just in time to catch a spark, the noise and the concussion and the reeling shock were for a moment as terrific as the end of the world would have been to that boy.

Lying flat on his back on the floor, and staring stupidly at the deck boards above his head, Jack's first conscious sensation was that somebody was knocking and rattling at the door, shouting his name and summoning him to open at once, while from somewhere beyond arose a dismal sound of shrieking and wailing in the voices of women and children.

"Jack! Jack Billington!" shouted the peremptory voice at the door, "open, or we must drive in

the boards!" and then a milder but sterner voice, which the boy recognized as that of the governor himself, repeated: —

"John Billington! Are you within, boy? If so, open at once!"

"Break it if you 're o' mind to," mumbled Jack, turning reckless under the pressure of fright and pain and a dawning consciousness that he had done some terrible thing and was already a criminal past forgiveness.

And yet when after a little pause that grave voice ordered, "Set your shoulder to the door, Latham, and have it open after some fashion without delay," Jack crawled to his feet with some hazy feeling in his mind that to find the cabin door spoiled would make his father angry. The poor child was yet too stunned to consider that in view of his greater offence this last would be swallowed up as a mere detail, but as with cold and trembling fingers he drew back the bolt, his first feeling was that this act settled the whole affair, and he could run away and hide for a time until this queer feeling in his head and this weakness in his legs had passed away.

But as he would have slipped out Latham's

brawny hand seized him by the arm and the governor himself sternly said : —

"Stay where you are, boy! What is this that you have done?"

"I did but let off daddy's piece to get some sparks. I wanted to fire my volcano."

"Look you now! It 's all along of my talk of the fire-mountain I run afoul of down Italy way, half a dozen years ago," exclaimed Bill Ely, a sailor standing by, and Jack, casting a rueful eye down at the floor, murmured : —

"Ay, but she did n't go off."

"Did n't go off, say you?" cried the sailor, pressing into the room. "What! you would fain have fired a pound or so of gunpowder not four feet from the cabin fire, and all those folk sitting there? Why, Master Governor, 't is a rare wonder one of us stand here alive this minute."

"Peace, Ely! I will take charge of this matter," replied Carver, motioning for the sailors and other stragglers to draw back, and then stepping himself into the cabin, which indeed presented a melancholy plight.

The charge of birdshot, which Jack had utterly forgotten must go somewhere if the gun was fired,

had most of it passed out through the porthole, swung open for light and air, but a good deal remained embedded in the woodwork and open lid of the chest, while the stifling smoke at first filling the place was now settling in heavy grime upon every object exposed.

The mound of powder had, by the mercy of Providence, escaped the sparks destined to set it on fire, and so had the keg of gunpowder left standing open beside it.

Several things had been thrown down and the fragment of looking-glass, so highly prized by Jack's mother, lay in hopeless fragments on the floor. The boy himself, pale, grimed with smoke, one finger burned and bleeding, and his hair blown straight on end and falling back in wild confusion, was not the least startling object in the room; and the governor's voice grew milder as, after surveying the whole scene, he turned to the culprit and demanded: —

"Do you know, boy, that but for God's wonderful pity upon your foolishness, you and we and this whole ship's company might now be but dead men and you the murderer? What have you to say for yourself?"

"I wanted to make a burning mountain like yon that Ely tells of. I did n't go for to blow up the ship. Daddy will kill me outright."

And Jack, his courage all gone for the moment, sank down upon the edge of the chest, a wretched, whimpering, very miserable boy indeed.

"Nay, thy father sha'n't kill thee, lad," interposed Elder Brewster not unkindly; "not but what I think a reasonable chastisement will do thee good and help thee to remember" —

"Nay, I 'll not forget in a hurry, I promise you, sir, if you 'll but hinder my father from taking his belt to me," interrupted Jack hurriedly. "I can stand the stick well enough, but when he gives me the buckle end of the belt 't is enough to kill me."

"There! Go you downstairs to the women and get some water to wash thyself, and pray one of them to kindly bind up thy hand and — nay, then, what have we here?"

For as Jack rose to obey a stream of gunpowder which had burst through his pocket came trickling down his leg as if he was indeed sore wounded and bled gunpowder.

"'T is but a little powder," murmured Jack; and subdued by penitence and fright he stood over the

keg of gunpowder and turned out both pockets, and even surrendered the squibs still hidden in his bosom.

"If I might but clean up the place a bit and put things as I found them, mayhap dad would let me off easier," suggested he when this was over; and Carver, suppressing a smile, gave the required permission, and leaving the lad to his zealous labors went to enter the incident in his journal, where it may still be read.

"There's a boy will either make a spoon or spoil a horn, as the saying is," remarked he to the Elder when they again sat down to the study of their chart, and the Elder sadly replied: —

"Do men gather figs of thistles?"

We have not time just now to tell of what Goodman and Goodwife Billington said or did when they returned to the Mayflower, or exactly what amount of punishment was meted out to the culprit, but we may be sure that the good governor and elder saw to it that Billington was not allowed to chastise his son unmercifully, and especially that he was forbidden to use his leather belt, and more particularly its buckle end, in place of the rod recommended by Solomon.

Nor did the Pilgrims forget in setting down an account of this incident to give solemn thanks to God, who so marvelously preserved them not only from dangers of shipwreck and savage enemies and starvation and sickness, but even from the foolish experiments of a naughty boy.

THE RAILROAD CUT.

BY

WILLIAM O. STODDARD.

THE RAILROAD CUT.

"EVERYTHING looks just alike when it's all covered up with snow — especially when dark 's beginning to come," he said as he stood still and stared around him. "You can't just tell whether this 'ere is Lije Morgan's pasture lot or Dr. Green's, and they 're two mile apart."

He was a pretty vigorous-looking young fellow, but his plush cap was pulled down and his coat collar was pulled up, and only one tuft of his brown-yellow hair could be seen perking out behind his right ear and over the collar. He was not shivering, but his face was almost red enough in the frosty wind to keep its freckles out of sight.

"I 'm just too tired to stamp," he said, "if my feet should freeze for it. All day long, and only one rabbit! What do you think of that, Mump? Did you know 't was getting dark, and all the chores to do after we get home?"

He was not alone, therefore, and the fellow he spoke to was not standing up. He was sitting

down and he was shivering. He answered with a whine which may have referred to the despised rabbit or to the wind or to the dark, but he held up his head in a way to let anybody see why the kind of lower jaw he carried made them call him "Mump." His hair was yellower than his master's, but he wore no other coat and it could all be seen.

"This is awful, Mump! We've got to push ahead anyhow, and I can't guess just where we are."

That was truly a bad condition of things for a boy with a dog and a gun and one rabbit, and with no end of chores to do somewhere, if he could get there.

He did push on, across the white blanketed levels and rolls of the wide field he had wandered into, and every now and then he made remarks to Mump. Perhaps he spoke to himself, too, when he told a fellow named Joe Hackett what a mess they must be getting ready for him at home for being out so late.

Dark, dark it grew, and darker and more rapidly by the help of a drifting frost-fog, such as comes before a thaw, and it seemed harder and more dis-

couraging work every minute to wade on through the breaking crust of that snow.

"Woof! woof-oof! woof!"

"Hullo! Mump has got to another fence and he wants me to help him over," said Joe. "Cæsar! what 's that?"

It was not so very loud a sound that came back from the deepening darkness ahead of him. A roar — a rush — a rattle — a loud, ringing thud, as of stone and iron dashed heavily together. More rush and rattle, and mingled with it was all the frantic yelping and barking that one poor, weary-legged, yellow dog had left in him when he reached that place. He ended by throwing up his head and sending forth a prolonged, mournful howl, and perhaps the very shape of his lower jaw aided him in putting into that howl so much of grief and lamentation.

Joe had been standing still and listening, but he now stepped excitedly, cautiously forward, exclaiming, —

"I guess I know now. It 's awful! Just so. Here I am. It 's the new railway cut, back of Dr. Green's, through the ridge! Something 's busted!"

He was almost compelled to grope his way as he

came to the spot where Mump was now sitting with his head up for another howl.

"That 's it," said Joe. "I know. It 's that there big bowlder in the fence, along the cut. The frost has underworked it and let it slide. Made a big gap, too. Lot of the fencing has gone down with it. Now won't there be an awful smash when the express train gets here! Men knocked all to bits! Women killed! Children, too! I 've read about just such things. Awful!"

He dropped his gun and his rabbit, and for a moment he felt like howling louder than Mump if there was any use in it.

"I could go and stir up Dr. Green's folks, but what could they do? They could n't h'ist out that rock nor the gravel. Could n't the train be stopped? I don't know how it could be. It must be pretty near time for it. O–ooh!"

Never in all his life probably had Mump sent out such a howl as he did at that moment, but at the end of it there was a long, sharp, doleful whine, that almost sounded as if he had said: "Fire–ire–ire–yur–fi–yur!"

"Just the thing!" shouted Joe. "You are right this time, Mump, if you ain't worth a cent to

stir up rabbits. You don't know a rabbit-track when your nose is rubbed into it, but I 'm glad you said 'fire'; if I can get down there without breaking my neck."

There were bushes and trees along the fence, and even in the dark Joe managed to break off handfuls of dried twigs, dead bark, and rail splinters and to bundle them together tightly with his handkerchief. After that was done, and he did it in a hurry, it seemed pokerish work to go down into the cut by way of the rugged gully left behind by the landslide.

"I must keep a good grip on my gun," he said as he began to slowly work his way down the first sloping yards of the gloomy, yawning, mysterious-seeming, black chasm.

"Now the firewood. Now the rabbit, Come on, Mump. Careful now. A step at a time and hold on tight as I go;" and he drew a very long breath.

Several of what seemed dreadfully dark, long minutes went groping by him.

"Over fifty feet deep, I 've heard 'em say," he remarked, and just then he suddenly found his feet slipping from under him and felt that he could not stop himself.

"Oh! oh! I'm going! It's another slide! Ah–h! oh! there! Here I am at the bottom! Not a bone broken."

Owing to the fact that it had been a slide instead of a fall, he was merely jarred — a pretty sharp jar — when he brought up against the huge bowlder, the weight of which had aided the frosts and thaws in preparing and perfecting that terrible piece of mischief.

"It has n't hurt me much, but what if the lightning train should come along just now? I 'd be ground up" — but there he was interrupted by a torrent of pawing and whining, almost under his left elbow.

"Poor Mump!" he said; "he was pretty nigh buried under that douse of sand and gravel. Out you come! There! Now for a fire right on top of the bowlder."

Joe had bravely stuck to his supply of kindlings, and one of his pockets was jam-full of the paper he had not needed that day for gun-wadding. Of course he had matches. No boy of his kind ever went into the woods without all the matches needed to kindle all the fires that a hunter might require.

The bowlder, many tons in weight and size, stood up right across the railway track, promising a terrific shock to a locomotive striking it at the rate, maybe, of a mile a minute. It seemed to Joe Hackett that he could almost see how that gap would look, heaped up with the shattered wreck of the engine, the baggage cars, and all the crowded passenger cars.

His fingers were numb and they worked nervously. He wasted match after match before he could get one of them to go off well.

"Hurrah!" he shouted. "It's going. It's lighting the paper. Now for some bark and some splinters."

Then he seemed to hold his breath as the bright, pleasant, hopeful flame began to flare and flicker and dance and some birch bark began to smoke.

"Quick now!" he shouted again. "Maybe there is n't any time to spare. I wish I had more of that bark. It blazes" —

Mump was doing his best to supply bark, but the light of the fire already kindled went out into the darkness of the cut and showed Joe the scattered fence rails which had tumbled down there with the landslide.

"Must ha' been four or five lengths of that fence," he said as he made an energetic dash for the nearest rails. "They 'll burn first-rate — chestnut and pine and oak. Some o' them are spruce saplings. Dry as bones. Oh, but won't they kindle? I 'll have a fire! Guess I 'd like to be warmed up a little myself."

The seasoned rails were indeed capital fuel and the small beginning on the top of the bowlder grew fast into a magnificent bonfire blaze. The dry spruce crackled and snapped and spurts of flame went up, and before many minutes a great, red, warning glow went out farther and farther up and down the gloomy cleft which had been made to let the iron road through Dr. Green's hill farm.

"More rails!" said Joe excitedly. "I may have to climb up and throw down the whole fence. I 'll wait and keep it up till the train comes anyhow. Splendid bonfire! Just a roarer! Pile 'em on! Hurrah! oh, dear me, there she comes! They won't stop. Oh, dear, what 'll I do? I 'll fire my gun."

It was a double-barrel, and the shrill shriek of the approaching locomotive was replied to by two sharp reports which echoed well between the steep sides of the chasm.

"I'LL KEEP IT UP TILL THE TRAIN COMES, ANYHOW."

Of course the engineer had seen that great glare ahead of him.

Of course he had suspected that it was a danger warning.

Nevertheless, a lightning-express train cannot be pulled in like a team of horses. In spite of all that could be done with airbrakes and steam-power the train dashed on and seemed to be rushing madly to destruction. Engine, baggage cars, palace cars, sleeping cars, way passenger cars loaded with valuables and crowded with precious lives — on they came, while the steam whistle sent out hoarse screams which sounded like cries of terror.

The brilliant, fire-white, glaring eye of the locomotive shone swiftly nearer and nearer, and Joe could not know how steadily and skilfully the engineer was doing his duty.

Mump's head was up in a howl that was drowned in the roar of the coming train, and the radiance of the headlight was mingling with the glow of the warning fire on the rock at the moment when Joe Hackett threw himself face downward upon the snowy track behind the bowlder. He had not thought of escaping, of climbing out of the gap, of

running away. He was thinking only of the crash he supposed was about to come.

"I can't see it! I won't see it!" he shouted as if he were trying to hear himself speak in all that increasing uproar.

Louder and louder it grew. It was thunderous. It was deafening. He was shuddering from head to foot, when he suddenly seemed to hear all the noise stop at once. Then a strange kind of momentary silence that followed was split in two by the most tremendous steam-whistle he had ever listened to.

"Why!" exclaimed Joe. "They're smashed, but she has n't even busted her whistle!"

So he sprang to his feet again, but the smoke and blaze on the rock forced him to go around it to look, and his heart was beating like a trip-hammer.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, and then he tried to say, "Hurrah!" but he had to give it up.

There stood the train, a long one, with the cow-catcher nose of its engine almost snubbing against the black side of the bowlder on the track.

"So close as that?" he said, but all he could do was to stand still and see dozens of men pouring

out of the cars and hurrying forward. The first half-dozen who came quickly worked their way over the rubbish to the bowlder, and Joe knew by his uniform that one of them was the conductor.

"You did it, did you?" he asked of Joe. "How on earth did you get into the cut? How'd you know there'd been a landslide?"

"Woof! Woo-oof!" replied Mump, but Joe pointed up the side of the cut, and now it seemed to him that he understood, for the first time, how very much landslide had come down when he and Mump did.

"I was out hunting," he said. "Out too late. I got there just as the slide started. There was n't any way to save the train but to climb right down and start a bonfire."

"You did n't come down that precipice in the dark to do it?" asked a large, grim, dignified man, standing by the conductor. "Seems to me as if no man living could!"

"Lots o' rock and stuff slid down with me," said Joe, "but I got here in time. Ain't I glad, though! There was n't anybody hurt, was there?"

"Not a soul got a scratch!" replied the con-

ductor. "Bully for you, my boy! You've saved more lives!"

"God bless you, my son!" he heard in another voice, a deep voice that was husky and shaking. "All my family are on board that train."

There were other voices after that, but it was hard for them all, even when three or four of them spoke at once, to make Joe understand that any credit for saving the train belonged to him.

"I'll catch it for getting home so late," he said; "all my chores to do yet."

"We'll see about that," said the big, grim, dignified man, and the next second he actually laughed aloud. "I'll go right along with you."

"There," said Joe, "I must n't forget my rabbit. Come, Mump."

"That's it," laughed the conductor, "take care of your rabbit;" but Joe lost it, after all, in the fuss the passengers of that train made over him before he got away, at the end of it.

But after all it was only a rabbit, and instead of it Joe is to have the fifty-acre farm next to the old Hackett Place, as soon as he is of age, for the company and the passengers made him a present of it.

THE STORY OF A PICTURE.

BY

E. L. MURPHY.

THE STORY OF A PICTURE.

THE poor little procession came slowly down the Rue St. Jacques. The white horses, the white hearse and pale blue funeral wreaths, and the two solitary mourners following, hand in hand, a man and his little boy — all told the sad story.

The mother and wife had succumbed to the hardship of her lot. Thus Pierre Rollin and his little Jean were left alone. To be sure, there was kind old Mère Ramey who kept a little fruit shop below, who had been an angel of goodness to them through those dark days of sorrow and loss; and there was Sœur Madeleine, and the good curé also, but when the dear mother is gone out of a boy's life there remains a heartache which friends and kindness, be they ever so true, cannot cure.

So thought Pierre Rollin as he wended his sad way to Montponnasse, and homeward, his sorrowful mission accomplished, and he clasped closer the little hand within his own, and said over and over to himself that he would be henceforth both mother

and father to his dear boy. They climbed up the dark stairs to their little rooms in the top of a house in the Rue St. Jacques. How silent it was! A tear fell upon the boy's hand. He looked up, and then with a passion of tender love he threw his arms about his father. "Ah, my poor papa!" he said. It was enough; comrades from this moment, they would live for each other, and love should brighten their humble lot, made sacred by a mutual sorrow.

It was the daily regret of Rollin that his work demanded his absence from home from early morn till dusk, for thus poor little Jean was forced to pass many lonely hours. His father rose early and prepared their breakfast upon the earthen chafing-dish, and then hurried away on his long tramp across the river, where, in the Rue du Temple, he was employed as a wood-carver.

When the school hour arrived kind Mère Ramey climbed up to see if the little boy was ready. She carefully fastened the blue cloak about his neck and drew the hood round the face with loving care, and then, hand in hand, they went downstairs and across the street. Here her care ends, for the school is not far away, and when it is over the master brings the boys safely to the corner before he dismisses

them. The fruit shop is in sight, and Jean is sure to find a warm bite waiting for him in the tiny kitchen in the rear. Then the long afternoon begins. Jean has but few diversions.

He sits much at the window looking down into the court of the Hospital Val de Grace. He would like to go in there and play on the cool grass, but the gendarme pacing back and forth before the gate does not like little boys, Jean is sure, because he never smiles upon him. The birds on the roof are an unceasing delight. They drink the dew from the purple flowers of the stone-crop growing in the crannies of the tiles, or sit and plume themselves after their bath on the rain-pipe, as joyfully as though they are in a green field in the country. They come morning and evening to be fed, and are so tame that the child could catch them if he tried, but they eat and fly away, and poor Jean is lonely again.

It is only four o'clock. He wishes it were five, for then he could go down to the street and begin to look for his father. Why should he not go to meet him? He has never been across the river alone, but when his dear *maman* was here they often went as far as the Panthéon and the pretty church

near by where the golden tomb was. His *maman* had told him about it. Thinking all these thoughts, he went slowly down the stairs one afternoon. Mère Ramey had a customer just then and did not look out. If she had, there would have been no picture and no story.

The gendarme was pacing as usual slowly by the gate at the Val de Grace. The boy looked longingly through the iron palisades. The grass looked so green and soft; but the gendarme did not smile, and Jean went on. Up the Rue St. Jacques on the other side was the school for the poor deaf and dumb boys, and the great elm tree which *maman* said was very old — four hundred years. He could not count so many. The sparrows were twittering in the branches and choosing a roosting-place for the night. In the court of the Institute des Sourds-muets the boys were out at play. Their voices were harsh, and their gestures so unlike other boys that Jean stopped to watch them. How fast their fingers flew! They could talk without using their tongue and lips, *maman* said. The bell at the Val de Grace struck five. He must go on.

Here was the Rue Sufflot and the Panthéon with the great pictures of the dear Ste. Généviève

when she was a little girl, and down there in the corner of the church where *maman* loved best to say her prayers. He wondered if a little boy might go in alone. The vesper music stole softly out. It invited him to enter. A woman smiled upon him as he entered, and then Jean knew he had done well in coming there, and he knelt down where he had so often knelt with *maman*. Was heaven far away, he wondered, and could it be more beautiful than this?

Here was such stillness and warmth and beauty; and the music and the glorious color of the sun's last rays as they came through the great window over the altar and gilded the exquisite carving of the rood-loft, all filled the heart of the boy with awe and joy unspeakable.

When the services was ended and Jean came out with the throng of worshipers, evening had fallen.

He suddenly remembered his father and felt bewildered. He started to run across the street, when a carriage came swiftly round the corner near the Panthéon. The cochière, with proverbial recklessness, did not pull up his horses in time and our poor little boy was thrown down. The occupant of the carriage, Madame B——, agonized at the acci-

dent, directed the now unconscious child to be placed in her arms, and they were driven at a speed otherwise inexcusable to the children's hospital in the Rue ——. . Here in a little white bed in the accident ward the gentlest of hands ministered to his needs, while the kind solicitude of Madame B —— provided that every possible attention should be bestowed upon the sufferer by her driver's carelessness.

. . . . . .

Pierre Rollin plodded his weary way homeward that night, full of anxious, loving thoughts of his poor lonely boy, and hastening his footsteps as he counted the long hours of his enforced absence from him. Something must be done, he thought. Mère Ramey had to care for her little shop, and could not be ever climbing up those long stairs to see after the child; besides the cold short winter days would soon be here; there would be no fire, and the picture of the little figure waiting his return in a dark and cheerless room gave him a real heartache. Arriving in the Rue Sufflot just after the accident, he was accosted by a fellow-artisan, who exclaimed: —

"Ah! my poor fellow, your little boy has just

gone to the hospital," recounting the details of the unfortunate occurrence.

"Impossible!" replied Pierre Rollin. "He could not have been so far from home." But with heavy forebodings he hurried away to the fruit shop to find old Mère Ramey distractedly wringing her hands at the boy's absence, thus confirming Rollin's fears. Nor was this the most of it, for in his anxiety to learn the truth he had failed to ask which hospital the injured child had been carried to.

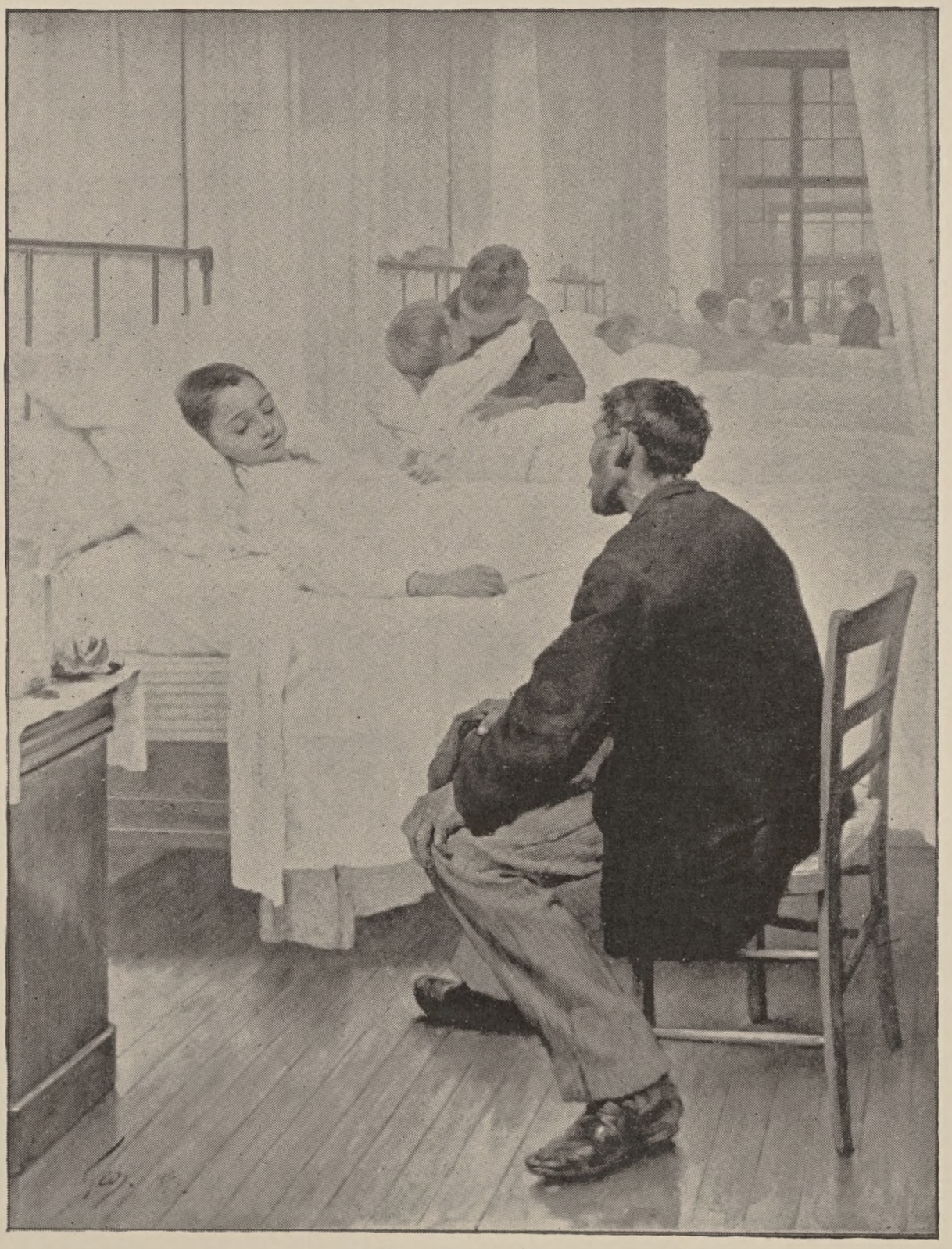
It was therefore after much delay and torturing suspense that Pierre Rollin arrived late in the evening at the door of the Hospital Ste. Thérèse. Long past the hour for visitors, the matron was inclined to turn a deaf ear to his prayers to enter and look for his little Jean. But the circumstances were so unusual that the matron's kind heart was touched by the man's despair. Yes, an unconscious child had been brought there in madame's carriage at nightfall—injury to the head. Enjoining perfect quiet, the matron led the way with finger on lip.

Like two shadows they stole on tiptoe down the dimly lighted ward with its rows of little beds, and here and there a white-gowned nurse hovering over

some restless child like an angel of light. As they drew near the end of the ward the matron turned to look at the silent man who walked beside her. His gaze was bent upon the face of a little lad lying with closed eyes in the last white bed in the row. If the matron had doubted the expediency of bringing so late a visitor here, she rejoiced now at her reluctant consent. Into the man's face there sprang a look of blessed recognition, of humble thankfulness, of entire acquiescence. He had found his boy.

No mark of the cruel wheel on the little pale face and, please God, he would be well again ere many days. Rollin sank on his knees at the bedside, one moment of silent thanksgiving to the good God, a parting glance at the little sleeper, and he signed to the matron that he was ready to go.

This was the beginning of many visits to the hospital, for although little Jean had escaped serious injury, the nervous shock brought on a fever which kept him a prisoner in the little white bed for many weeks. Pierre Rollin was permitted to go in every day on his way home from work, and on Sunday, which was general visiting day, there was a whole long precious hour to sit by his boy;



THE MAN WAITED IN BREATHLESS SILENCE.

and when the fever had finished its work and the blessed day came at last that Jean opened his eyes and smiled to see his dear papa sitting there, Pierre felt that his cup of joy was full. It seemed to them both that Jean was returned from a long journey. He slept and waked and then slept again. It was like a dream. He remembered the beautiful light of the church, then the darkness in which he lost his dear papa. Now it was bright morning again, and he opened his eyes once more to see if it were really true, and smiled his little wan and shadowy smile into the faithful eyes bent above him.

Among the frequent visitors to the Hospital Ste. Thérèse was the famous painter of children, M. Geoffroy, and passing through the ward one afternoon, he saw Pierre Rollin sitting by Jean's bedside. The child was sleeping. The man waited in almost breathless silence, his gaze fixed upon the face of the little sleeper. Time passed unheeded, for soon or late those waxen lids would be lifted and his reward would come. M. Geoffroy stopped. He read in the picture before him the whole pathetic story, and felt that he too must await the supreme moment of waking.

Presently the shadowy smile gathered about the

lips, the eyelids gently lifted. "My poor papa," said the child softly and put out his hand. Pierre took it into his own and pressed his lips upon it. The painter stole away. It was holy ground, he thought, whereon even "angels might fear to tread."

All the way home M. Geoffroy saw this picture. It had taken such entire possession of his mind that everything else passed by unheeded, and he narrowly escaped being run over by carts several times. As he neared his studio he grew impatient and quickened his steps.

There was still light enough to rub in a color sketch, and as soon as he arrived he seized his palette and brushes and painted away as only a master can who has an idea that clamors to be put on canvas at once. Oftentimes the idea lets the artist alone after he has made a slight sketch. But sometimes it is persistent, and if it is a good and worthy idea it refuses to be satisfied with merely a sketch but urges its master to carry it to completion. Such a one was this of M. Geoffroy, and long after he had put aside his colors — as it was too dark to work — he felt the urging of his idea till it ended in his making charcoal sketches all the evening. When the clock struck midnight the painter

had made up his mind that he would paint the picture of Pierre and his little boy ; in fact, he must paint it or his idea would give him no peace at all. He had decided upon his arrangement of composition, and the next day and the next he went to the hospital and saw the happy look come into the boy's face when his father came to sit a few minutes by his bedside.

M. Geoffroy's interest in the child and his father grew as he came to know the history of their lives. It was the sad and, alas! too common story of the poor in Paris; faithful work from dawn till dark, meagre pay, torturing anxiety, sickness, loss, and cruel poverty that enfolded them and made every effort and aspiration fruitless. This was the long sum of ills that Pierre rehearsed and which moved the painter's heart to pity.

Jean was recovering. It was his delight to sit in the sunshine and look out into the hospital garden. The grass was still green and the birds twittered in the treetops and waited for the crumbs, just as they used to do on the leads of the roofs in the Rue St. Jacques. But it was cold now and they sat on one foot and drew the other up into the warm breast of feathers.

New Year's came. There were lovely flowers and toys and picture-books for Jean, and best of all a little purse with four shining gold pieces for papa, Madame B—— said. And so on New Year's eve when Rollin appeared there, propped up among the pillows of the little white bed, in his pretty new red gown, was Jean, with such a wise and happy look upon his face that Rollin answered smile for smile for every joy.

And when Jean slyly dropped the purse into his father's pocket, and when, suddenly feeling it very heavy, Rollin dived down and brought up the glittering treasure — what joy!

There would be new clothes for "dear papa," and shoes, and a stove instead of the old worn-out chafing-dish, and, oh, sweeter than all else, flowers, plenty of flowers for *maman's* grave. Thus the happy child rattled on and poured out his grateful heart, little dreaming that at that very moment a tradesman and his assistant were toiling up the dark stairs in the Rue St. Jacques with a hamper of good things to eat and comfortable things to wear. It was easy to guess what kind heart had prepared this surprise for Pierre Rollin.

The month of January was drawing near its

close. M. Geoffroy had by this time become well acquainted with Pierre, and of course with the boy, for all children were fond of the painter and recognized him as their friend at once. One Sunday morning they had all three gone for a little walk in the hospital garden and to feed the sparrows who were waiting for their breakfast.

"Jean, my boy," said M. Geoffroy, "the nurse says you will be well enough to go home next Sunday. Would you like to come and see my studio with your papa?"

Jean's eyes sparkled.

"Oh, would n't I! We shall go, shall we not, papa?" he cried.

Pierre Rollin was almost as pleased himself, and so it was agreed that the painter should come with a carriage for Jean and his father the following Sunday, and after calling at Mère Ramey's — for Jean must see her first — drive to his studio. Jean thought it the most wonderful place he was ever in, and walked about looking at the plants and the pictures, and suddenly spied on the easel a sketch which made him cry: "O papa, look! look! There is the hospital!"

Pierre recognized at once in the rough sketch

the children's ward and his thin figure in his workman's clothes, and turned to the painter with: "Ah, monsieur, my little Jean, is it not?"

"Yes, Rollin," said M. Geoffroy; "and I 'm going to paint it for the salon, and I want you and Jean to pose for me just as I saw you at Ste. Thérèse."

"But my work — I cannot leave it, for I shall lose my place," said Pierre.

"What do you do, then?"

"I am a wood-carver, monsieur."

"What, then? You too are an artist?"

"Ah, monsieur, that is saying too much! I am but a workman."

"Well, I will go and talk to the foreman to-morrow and see if he can spare you for a few weeks, and I will pay you double what you get at the shop."

"Monsieur is too good, but, if the foreman will let me, I will come gladly, for I can see my boy all day then."

And so it was arranged. M. Geoffroy went to see the foreman, who said he could manage without Rollin for a while, and then he returned to the studio, prepared to begin his picture. Day by day

it grew under the cunning hand of the master, who painted indeed *con amore*, while Pierre Rollin and his little boy, fully conscious of the important part they were playing in the matter, lent themselves to the task of posing with unwearied interest and patience. It was indeed a happy time for the boy and his father, and Jean's face wore such a look of deep content and joy that M. Geoffroy had no need to draw upon his imagination for expression.

When in due time the beautiful picture, "A Visit to the Hospital," was completed and exhibited at the salon it attracted universal attention and was purchased at once by the French government and placed in the Luxembourg. And so, by ways often sad and dark, these lives were brought into light and gladness, and if some happy day by-and-by Jean should pluck the flower of success which grows not out of reach in France, it would not be strange, would it?

TOM STARBUCK'S ADVENTURE.

BY

CAPTAIN J. H. B. ROBINSON.

TOM STARBUCK'S ADVENTURE.

THE little island of Nantucket, fifty years ago, was the greatest whaling port in the world. All the inhabitants were interested in this industry in some way, and every boy was eager to go to sea as soon as he was large enough to work.

Tom Starbuck was the eldest of several children, and his father commanded a whaler. When Tom was eighteen he begged so hard to go to sea that his father determined to take him one voyage, hoping to cure him of his desire for the life. But Tom was in his glory. He seemed utterly devoid of fear, and as he was unusually tall and strongly built he was soon a valuable addition to the crew.

The old bark Ranger had been three years from home and had made a prosperous voyage. Her hold was full of sperm oil, and Captain Starbuck wished to secure a supply of fresh water and vegetables before starting on the long voyage around the Horn. They were not far from the Fiji group of islands, many of which are uninhabited, and he

determined to touch at one of the latter and try and fill his water casks without losing the time it would take to go to New Zealand after a supply of this very necessary commodity.

Accordingly the old bark was soon plowing her way through the blue waters of a little bay that nestled in the side of a large island near by. There were no signs of life ashore, and after carefully scanning the beach through his spyglass, Captain Starbuck sent a boat's crew ashore to search for water. They were armed with muskets and ordered to keep together while ashore. In case of danger they were instructed to discharge a gun at once and help would be sent from the ship.

Tom Starbuck, now a brawny six-footer, was one of the boat's crew. He carried a musket like the rest and was eager for a chance to stretch his legs on the land.

When they reached the beach the old mate ordered one man to stay and keep an eye on the boat while the rest looked for water.

"The captain said we was ter keep together, sir," grumbled the sailor, who evidently had no relish for being left alone.

In vain the mate argued. Not one of the sailors

would consent to remain with the boat, and at length Tom Starbuck cried:

"You 're a pack of cowardly old women! Go ahead, Mr. Coffin, and hunt for water. I 'll stay here myself. There 's nothing here to be afraid of, and I 'll just have a swim while you 're gone. Go ahead, I say."

The old mate hesitated, but there seemed no other way and he started off at once, followed by the other men.

When he was alone Tom leisurely stripped and began splashing about in the water, keeping close to the beach, however, where his musket lay ready for instant use.

After he had tired of this sport he sat down in the shade and began to amuse himself by practising a sleight-of-hand trick which he had seen performed by one of the sailors. He had a natural aptitude for this sort of thing, and, as he never lost a chance of adding to his knowledge, he had picked up quite a number of simple tricks, little dreaming that they would ever be the means of saving his life.

He had four little pebbles and two palm leaves before him, and was so deeply engrossed in making

the pebbles appear and disappear that he did not see a hideously tattooed face which was cautiously thrust from the thick bushes not ten yards away. There was not the faintest rustle as the savage disappeared again, but five minutes later fully a score of dusky Fiji warriors were creeping stealthily upon the unconscious young sailor, who was still deep in his legerdemain.

"There!" he exclaimed aloud, after a moment's practice, "I've got that now. I wonder what keeps the mate so long."

As he spoke he raised his eyes from the ground.

For an instant his blood seemed to fairly freeze in his veins, for he was seated in the midst of a crowd of Fiji cannibals. They were all armed with spears and clubs, and their ferocious faces were lit up with exultation at their success in surprising the white man. From their ears and noses depended huge rings of bone, while even their lips were tattooed with strange devices.

It was enough to appall the stoutest heart, and for a moment Tom Starbuck felt he was lost. Then his daredevil courage asserted itself and he looked down for his gun. It was too late; for even then the weapon was being passed from hand to hand by the

natives, who plainly showed that they had no idea of its use.

Resistance was plainly out of the question, and he was wondering why the savages did not kill him at once when one of his captors stooped and carefully picked up the pebbles and leaves with which Tom had been amusing himself. Then he guessed the truth. The natives had stolen upon him to kill him, but their curiosity had been aroused by his performance and they had watched him in amazement until he had discovered their presence. He did not know that his white skin was also a marvel to them, for they had never seen a white man before.

Determined to try and impress them with a sense of his importance, he put on a bold face and pointed to his clothes which lay near by. They were passed to him at once and he coolly dressed himself. Then he remembered the danger signal and pointed to the musket, which was also given him unsuspectingly.

As he grasped the weapon firmly he was tempted to make one desperate fight for life rather than be dragged to hopeless captivity, but his better sense prevailed, for he would have been speared to death

in an instant. He drew back the hammer and raised the gun to his shoulder. There was a large palm tree a few yards away, and taking careful aim at the smooth trunk, he pulled the trigger.

The report of the musket was followed by a chorus of yells from the natives, who fell back in terror at the unexpected noise. Seeing that no one was hurt, however, they began jabbering like monkeys and pointing toward the tree at which Tom had aimed. When they found the circular hole where the bullet had entered the tree their wonder was unbounded.

While they were discussing this new mystery two boats left the ship and pulled directly for the group on the beach. After a hurried consultation Tom was suddenly seized and bound hand and foot. Then his captors lifted him boldly and hurried away with their helpless captive.

A short walk took them across a little point of land to another bay, where a war canoe was pulled up on the beach. Tom was placed in this craft, and the warriors paddled away from the shore just as the sailors from the ship came in sight behind. They dared not use their guns for fear of killing Tom Starbuck, and when they had returned for their

boats the canoe was out of sight behind a projecting point of land fully a mile away.

Captain Starbuck was frantic when he realized that his son was lost, and began a systematic search of the island with an armed party, but it was soon plain that the place was uninhabited, and that the party of warriors must have landed accidentally while on their way from one island to another. As there were hundreds of islands in this group, many of them peopled by fierce cannibals, it was an almost hopeless undertaking to attempt to find his son.

We must leave the sorrowing father to pursue his search, and follow Tom as he was paddled swiftly away from his friends, bound securely and tossed into the bottom of the big canoe.

His captors removed his bonds in a short time, and he could see that they were heading for another island a few miles ahead. There were fully a score of broad-bladed paddles dipped at each stroke, and he saw that no whaleboat could hope to overtake the swift canoe. There was nothing to be done but to trust to fate, and this seemed a very slim hope indeed. He remembered hearing of a whaler who had been captured by these cannibals, and who lived with them ten years before he made his escape. He

had mystified the savages by his powers as a ventriloquist, and Tom Starbuck determined to attempt something of the sort himself rather than be served up at one of their feasts. His captors had stripped the whaleboat of everything movable, and Tom began to plan how he could use the various articles to advantage. There was a compass, a small pair of marine glasses, a lantern, a flint and steel, besides the customary bag of ship biscuit without which no boat ever leaves a whaleship.

As the canoe neared the beach Tom could see that there was evidently a large village there. The beach was full of native women and children, who were splashing about like ducks in the water, while fully a hundred huts were in sight a short distance from the water.

When a few rods from the beach the warriors uttered a long, shrill yell, which apparently was understood by those ashore, for the whole population at once left their different occupations and flocked to meet the canoe when it landed.

Tom put on a brave front and drew up his powerful figure to its full height as he marched between the two lines of savage faces. He felt that it would never do to betray his anxiety, but it needed stout

nerves to gaze unflinchingly at the horde of cannibals who pressed eagerly forward to have a peep at this pale-faced captive.

On arrival at a clearing in the centre of the village he saw two outlandish-looking objects, which he soon guessed were the medicine men of the tribe. To them the leader of the party addressed himself in a long harangue, at the same time producing the pebbles and leaves, together with the musket and other articles taken from the boat. The captive was then led out and the pebbles placed before him, while the chief plainly intimated his desire by signs that Tom should perform his wonderful act then and there.

Tom complied with a grave face, as if he were indeed working a miracle. Then he took the marine glasses and invited the chief to look through them. To his amazement the distant land was apparently brought so near that he could see the trees. But when the old medicine men wished to see this wonder Tom slyly closed the slide before handing them the instrument, and the result was an angry dispute between them and the chief, for they had of course been able to see nothing. Then Tom unscrewed one of the glasses, and using it as a lens

he scorched the back of the chief's hand with the rays of the tropical sun. With the flint and steel he then ignited a pile of dry leaves, to the intense delight of the savages, and his fame as a great medicine man was fully established.

He was now conducted to a large hut with great deference and left to himself. He noticed, however, that several warriors were evidently detailed to watch him every moment. His food was brought to him regularly and he had no fault to find with it, for it consisted of fresh fish and fruit, served up on clean palm leaves.

In his hut he was allowed to keep all the articles taken from the boat, the natives appearing afraid to meddle with them. With the glasses he swept the horizon day after day, hoping to see the white sails of the ship, but in vain.

The days slipped away rapidly, and Tom had been a prisoner for a fortnight without seeing an opportunity of escape. The old medicine men were treated with contempt by the warriors now, for they had a new white man who could perform unheard-of wonders. The deposed men glared at Tom vindictively whenever they saw him, but they dared not rebel.

The young man was beginning to despair. The ship must have given him up for dead and left the vicinity, or he would have heard something from her. Must he drag out his days here among these wretched cannibals? It seemed almost sure to be his fate.

But there was one thing he had not counted upon. The old medicine men dared not attempt to injure their successor, but they were determined to rid themselves of his hated presence at any cost. Although Tom was unaware of the fact, the old whaler was on the opposite side of the island searching patiently for him, and the natives in turn kept a sharp watch upon the vessel and the parties that landed.

One day Tom was surprised to receive a call from one of his rivals. For a long time he could make nothing of the native's signs, but at last the old fellow succeeded in making him understand that the ship was in a certain direction and that he was willing to help Tom escape. As near as the latter could understand, the medicine man was to guide him that night to the ship, and Tom spent the rest of the afternoon in a state of feverish excitement. Was it only a trap to lure him to his death?

He knew the warriors would kill him before they would allow him to escape, but he determined to make the attempt, come what might.

He loaded the musket as soon as it was dark and then there was nothing to do but wait. Soon he heard a sound outside and saw the old conjurer giving his guards a huge gourd of carva juice, from which they drank greedily. He was not surprised to see them nod at their posts shortly after, and soon they were sleeping soundly from the effect of some potion the medicine man had mixed with their drink.

The latter now appeared and led the way silently toward the hills. Tom stole along after him, his musket ready for instant use, for he had determined not to be taken alive again. He felt that death was preferable to dragging out his life in such a horrible manner.

For some time all was quiet. They reached a little cove where a small canoe was in readiness, and Tom's guide pointed to a light on the water less than a mile away. It was the ship's light, and Tom sprang into the canoe and paddled with all his strength just as the sounds of pursuit came plainly to his ears. Although totally unaccustomed to

using a paddle, he made fair progress. The pursuing party were still some distance behind him when the men on board the ship were aroused by a sound of paddles and saw a canoe with a single occupant drawing near.

Then came the welcome sound: —

"Ranger, ahoy!"

A wild cheer from the ship's crew testified that they recognized the voice, and a few moments later Captain Starbuck was hugging his stalwart son and sobbing like a child.

"I never expected to see you alive!" he cried. "How did you get away?"

While Tom was recounting his thrilling experiences the lookout reported the sound of paddles ahead and the crew were all placed at their stations and armed, while the cook was ordered to prepare plenty of hot water.

These preparations were scarcely completed when a large war canoe shot out from the shadow of the land and rapidly approached the vessel. When it was but twenty yards away the captain shouted "Fire!"

A sheet of flame followed his order and as the rattling discharge broke forth upon the still night

air the bullets tore their way through the frail canoe, wounding many of its occupants and sinking the craft at once. Those who were not hurt struck out vigorously for the shore, and the white men saw no more of them.

At daylight the ship caught a fresh breeze and was soon a safe distance from the land. Two weeks later the Ranger arrived at Auckland and procured her stores.

Tom Starbuck followed the sea for many years, and when pressed to tell a story he always related how he was once a white god for a lot of cannibals.

GRETCHEN.

BY

MARJORIE RICHARDSON.

GRETCHEN.

IT was the second concert Gretchen Ritter had ever attended. She was such a little girl, only ten years old, and the grandfather was so poor. He never had tickets given him, even though he helped interpret Beethoven's great symphonies and all the other wonderful compositions to a large audience every Wednesday evening.

It was not his fault. It would have been like a beam of sunlight to him to have seen his darling's golden head and loving blue eyes among the audience when he took his place on the great stage and looked down on the crowd of strange faces. But what could he do? He was only an obscure violinist and must not ask for favors, and, besides, Gretchen was such a very little girl to sit alone among all those people for a whole evening.

Gretchen agreed with him perfectly. She had a very humble opinion of herself, but she could afford to be humble, for had she not the grandfather to be proud of? Had she not dreamed of the day, that

delightful day, when Mr. Arnold, the cross director, should find out how much talent Herr Ritter really had and should allow him to play one of his own compositions to that expectant audience?

Gretchen had firm faith in her grandfather's music. How she thrilled and wept while listening to some of his dreamy andantes, and how her eyes danced and her cheeks glowed while she kept time to the bright little scherzos which sometimes, but not often, found their way among his compositions! And she could play them all herself, too. Ever since she could remember she had shared the dear old violin with him, and he had taught her his best, delighted with the really extraordinary ability of the little maid, whose small fingers seemed almost too tiny to fly over the strings with such marvelous rapidity.

"She can blay the piece," he often said to his only friend and confidant, Fritz Lützel, "she can blay the piece so goot as I. She can blay the piece better than I. Ah, wait, Fritz, wait till my Gretchen grow up a woman, then we shall see what we shall see!"

Fritz thought he was quite right, only that a mistake lay in waiting at all.

Why should not Gretchen astonish the world at

once? He had heard many a young artist applauded and praised who had not, he was sure, half the delicacy of touch, half the power of expression which his little friend possessed.

But the grandfather would not allow him even to speak of it.

"She is yet a so small mädchen," he would say gently, "and she haf no mütter, only me, her poor old grandfather, who can do nodings for her, nodings but gif her his best teaching. Wait, Fritz, wait till she grow a leetle older before we put her before the peoples. Let her be a leetle girl for but a few more year."

So Gretchen had waited and kept house in the three little rooms over the bakery, and practised all her odd moments, and once, once she had been to a concert.

Fritz Lützel, who played one of the French horns in the orchestra, had hurt his hand, and being granted a week's holiday, he made use of his liberty by taking Gretchen to one of the concerts.

Should she ever forget the great event — the lights, the people, and, more absorbing still, the great, beautiful music which seemed to fill her whole soul?

She had thought of it for months after, and now

she was really to hear it again, and under what circumstances!

Her dreams were to be realized, for the grandfather was at length to be the soloist, and moreover was to play one of his own compositions, "Der Abschied."

How such wonderful luck had come about, Gretchen did not at first know. Herr Ritter modestly attributed it to the sudden illness of Mr. Göllitz, the intended soloist, and the necessity for filling his place at once.

But when Fritz came in later in the evening he told Gretchen gleefully how the great musical critic, Mr. Warren, had overheard Herr Ritter playing over to himself one of the little andantes from his "Abschied." How he had been struck by his skill and had spoken to Mr. Arnold of him, and begged, or rather insisted, that he should be the soloist for the next concert, filling the place of Mr. Göllitz and playing that same little andante.

It was Mr. Warren's last week in America, and as for years the concerts had been under his supervision, Mr. Arnold was naturally anxious to please his patron, even to the extent of bringing the obscure old Herr Ritter into prominence.

So the matter had been arranged, and already the programs were being printed with Herr Ritter's name as soloist in large letters at the end, and "Selections from 'Der Abschied' (first time)" in small letters near the top.

Gretchen could hardly sleep that night for very excitement. Already she imagined the wonder and delight of the people at this new composer. The questions which would be asked, of where he could have remained hidden for so long; the increase of engagements, and at last money enough to carry them both, and Fritz Lützel, back to the Fatherland, that sunny Fatherland, which Gretchen could remember so faintly. Back to the grandfather's land of music, and to the little cottage near the great, bright city, where the first happy years of her childhood had been passed. She talked about it continually, and all day long after her modest housewifery was finished she would play parts of "Der Abschied" over and over.

Sometimes with closed eyes she imagined herself playing before crowded houses as the grandfather would play; sometimes with her eyes fixed on the little strip of blue sky visible from the tiny window she would dream herself back in her own little room

in the Weissbeide cottage. The crowning moment came when Fritz told her he had obtained permission for her to go to the concert and remain in the anteroom, where she could hear the music perfectly. Then for a day, it is true, "Der Abschied" was neglected while Gretchen washed and mended and made over her one best frock, and pressed out the broad pieces of blue ribbon which were to deck out her person a little for the great occasion.

For a time she was almost too happy, but at length came a cloud, and a very serious one it was.

Two days before the concert a painful attack of rheumatism came upon the grandfather. The poor old fingers of his right hand were so knotted that he could hardly hold the bow, and yet he must go to rehearsals and try to be thankful that it was his right instead of his left hand.

Gretchen bathed the poor fingers in warm liniment each night, and talked bravely of how the rheumatism sometimes departed as suddenly as it came; but her heart grew heavier and heavier, and Wednesday morning, the day of the concert, she could hardly keep back her tears when the grandfather entered the kitchen with a pale, anxious face.

"Mein Gretchen," he said in a low, trembling

voice, "it has kom a leetle also to the other hand."

They both knew too well that this was his only chance; that after Mr. Warren had gone away Mr. Arnold would trouble himself no more about the playing or composition of the old violinist. But if he could only be heard once! Herr Ritter was very modest, but he did have some hope that if his "Abschied" might be brought before the public for even a single time, he might perhaps be able to dispose of it; and now! If he could arrest the rheumatism in his left hand for one day, just for one day. He stayed in the house all that morning and afternoon, keeping the poor old hands as warm as possible, while Gretchen cheered him as best she could with her singing and hopeful words of encouragement.

Seven o'clock came and with it Fritz Lützel to escort them to the hall.

To his great relief Herr Ritter found that the rheumatism had gone from his left hand, and that he could move his right with but little pain; so Gretchen dressed herself with a light heart, humming little snatches from "Der Abschied"; and, as a crowning adornment, she placed in Herr

Ritter's coat a gay little scarlet boutonnière, for which she had been saving up her odd pennies — and you may be sure they were not many — for the past two weeks. Then the three set out for the hall together.

At first Gretchen was almost frightened by the noise and confusion, and after Herr Ritter and Fritz had left her to arrange their music and stands for the evening, she sat in a corner of the anteroom bewildered and wondering.

Everyone seemed to have so much to say, and said it in such a loud tone and with so many gestures, that it fairly made her head whirl, and she was glad enough when a gentleman who did not seem to have anything especial to do, and who was wandering aimlessly about, came at length to her corner and asked kindly if she were waiting for anyone.

She replied in her pretty, broken English, and then, as he continued to smile so pleasantly at her, she ventured to explain why she was there.

"Ah," said the gentleman thoughtfully, "so Herr Ritter is your grandfather! Well, well, and are you fond of music, too?"

Gretchen laughed softly, quite forgetting her

timidity at this strange question. "Fond of it?" she repeated; "if one came to me and should promise to me all the fine, beautiful houses, all the bright dresses — everything, if I give up the music, I would say no; for noding could I give it up except for the grandfader or Fritz, and they, they know what it is to me, they would not ask it. Why, see, then, mein Herr, I know each movement, each note which my grandfader play to-night.

"I have play it often myself, and I know how I felt when first I heard it, how I feel when now I hear it. It is as if life were one beautiful dream, and when the people hear it, ah, mein Herr, it will not be hard for the grandfader to sell his music after that!

"Do you know, perhaps, how he looks, which he is? There, coming here to us now with a red flower on his coat, and that is Fritz behind with him, *aber — was ist denn?*"

She suddenly interrupted herself as they came nearer and she caught sight of her grandfather's white face.

In a moment she was at his side and had tenderly lifted the poor trembling hands and looked earnestly at them. She knew, alas! too well, what had

happened. The sudden change from the warm bandages in which they had been wrapped all day to the cold air of the hall had brought on a worse attack of rheumatism, and she knew that it would now be impossible with his hands drawn as they were to touch the violin.

She stood for an instant unable to speak, scarcely understanding anything but her terrible disappointment. At last she became conscious of Mr. Arnold's angry voice beside them.

"Confound it, Ritter!" he was saying harshly, "you ought to have let me known in the morning that you would n't be able to play. Anyone knows that rheumatism is n't the work of a minute, and what am I going to do now, I should like to know? All the people here and no one to play the solos. Hang it, you 'll have to play, or leave the place for good and all. Mr. Warren," he said more respectfully, turning to Gretchen's friend, who stood listening silently, "I am sure you agree with me."

Herr Ritter looked slowly about him, at the manager's angry face, at poor Fritz's distressed one, and at Gretchen's bowed head, then wistfully at his own swollen hands.

"I cannot blay," he said; "I cannot. Come, Gretchen, we will go."

But a sudden thought had come to her; a thought that made her flush and tremble and shrink for a moment, and then she hurried to Mr. Warren's side and looked up bravely into his face.

"May I play 'Der Abschied' instead of my grandfader?" she said. "I know it well and can play it as goot as he. Will you let me try?"

For a moment there was silence in the little room. They were all too much astonished to speak. Then as Mr. Warren did not answer, Fritz came eagerly forward.

"It is true," he said in a quick low voice; "she can play it as well, perfectly as well, as Herr Ritter. Will you let her try?

Mr. Warren looked about in troubled perplexity. It was impossible to provide a soloist at a moment's notice. But then Gretchen was so small and he had never heard her play. Still Herr Ritter had great talent; why might not his granddaughter have inherited some of it? He glanced at Herr Ritter, who stood looking at him with a gleam of hope in his faded blue eyes as he waited breathlessly for

the decision. He looked at Gretchen. Her face was very pale but her eyes shone with a brave, steady light, and her voice did not falter as she said again : " May I try ? "

The orchestra was in its place and the audience was already growing impatient. It was a great risk, but he decided to take it.

" Yes," he answered slowly, " you may play. Mr. Arnold, you must go now and announce that a change has been made in the program."

Mr. Arnold, angry and bewildered, left the room, and Fritz, after an encouraging pat on Gretchen's shoulder, hurried away to take his place, leaving Mr. Warren, Herr Ritter, and Gretchen alone.

" Mein Herr," said Herr Ritter tremulously, " you have done much for us. Do not be afraid for my Gretchen. She can blay. You will see."

And he did see. When it came time for Gretchen to take her place on the stage she turned to him, as if understanding his fears, and said simply : —

" Do not be afraid that I shall spoil your concert. The people will like the grandfader's music, and I will do my best."

Then with an unfaltering step she walked straight on to the stage and took her place there alone,

A TRUE LITTLE GERMAN MAIDEN STOOD BEFORE THEM.

before all the people. There was a rustle throughout the hall. Everyone was leaning eagerly forward to catch sight of the little musician.

A true little German maiden stood before them. Her face was very white, but there was a trusting look in the sweet blue eyes which gazed down at them appealingly as if asking for their approval.

There was a certain pathos, too, in the poor little attempt which had evidently been made for a touch of girlish finery. The snowy white ruffles in the neck and sleeves of the carefully mended gown, the fresh piece of blue ribbon at the throat, and the little scarlet flower which at the last moment the grandfather had pinned beside it.

When the first shock of meeting the glare of the footlights and the gaze of the half-seen sea of human faces had passed, Gretchen stood before her audience with full confidence in herself. She thought only of the music she knew and loved so well and of earning the grandfather's applause at the end. Clasping closely the violin, her dear old friend, she raised it to her shoulder and began to play. The color returned to her face at the first familiar strain, and she was back again in the little kitchen. The people, the musicians, the great hall, everything

faded away from her, and it was not the soloist playing for money or fame, but a true heart playing for the happiness of those she loved and for all the hopes of the future.

When the last soft note had died away, there came at first that most flattering tribute which is accorded only to a true musician — a perfect silence.

The people were accustomed to listening to fine artists, but seldom had the old hall rung with such applause as then greeted the little girl who looked down at them with the happy dreams awakened by her music not yet gone from her eyes.

Suddenly she seemed to become aware that all this commotion was for her. She smiled shyly down at the friendly faces looking up at her, then hurried across the stage to the anteroom door where Mr. Warren was joining vigorously in the applause.

"Did you like it? Are you glad I tried? Will the grandfader be able to sell the music now?" she cried.

She never for a moment dreamed that the audience's approval was for her rendering, but thought it was all for the beauty of "Der Abschied."

"I say, Ritter," said Mr. Arnold, drawing the

grandfather aside, "that child of yours is a prodigy. She 'll make a great stir in the world, and the younger she 's brought out the better. I 'll tell you what I 'll do — I 'll give you a third of the profits, and I 'll take her for a tour through the United States, stopping at all the largest cities" —

"Mr. Arnold," interrupted Mr. Warren's quiet voice, "you need trouble yourself no further. The musical education of Herr Ritter's granddaughter will be my care for the future."

ELDER LELAND'S GHOST.

BY

HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH.

ELDER LELAND'S GHOST.

IT was n't so in Elder Leland's day" was a proverb among the Cheshire Hills. The farms in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, are fast losing their rural simplicity. Elder Leland has gone from the bowery roads that knew his stately presence for nearly fifty years. The memorial stone in the Cheshire churchyard tells how the people loved and honored him.

Elder Leland's ghost story is still told by the old farm firesides of western Massachusetts. It lingers amid the fading light of the past as a winter evening memory. The time was when if a venerable farmer wished to quiet the too light spirits of his household he related the awful story. And at that time the narrative was sure to be followed by large eyes, quiet manners, and cautious words. The young folks laugh at the story to-day, but "it was n't so in Elder Leland's day!"

The old Cheshire humorists are gone; and the many wonder tales once told by these prosperous

and jovial farmers, those of the Great Cheshire Cheese presented to President Jefferson, and Elder Leland's Ghost, only remain in popular literature, and the Tale of the Turkey with the Red String as farm lore. The first Cheshire, or "New Providence," is a New England deserted village now, and needs only a Goldsmith. Where it stood the old heroes of the Battle of Bennington sleep.

It is said that when the news that Thomas Jefferson had been inaugurated President reached New England, one of the good Puritan dames hung her Bible down in the well in a butter cooler. We could easily believe this of Elder Leland's day, did we not recall the fact that the butter cooler was usually put away in the savory old cheese room at that season of the year. The political campaign romancer began his work during the Jefferson candidacy; and the story that the author of the Declaration of Independence doubted the universality of the deluge led many good New England people to regard him as an atheist, and so he was called by the peripatetic orators of old Federalist views and traditions.

But, whatever Puritan dames may have thought at that time, there was joy among the busy and

industrious Baptist dames at Cheshire, Mass., when the old stage driver of the Berkshire Hills blew his horn, and swung his hat and shouted: "Hurrah for President Jefferson!" The buxom dairy women had been well schooled in Democratic politics by Elder Leland, himself an intimate friend of Jefferson and a disciple of the broad principles of the Declaration. Cheshirites had broad views in Elder Leland's day. Among these people was Freelove Mason, the ruddiest dame of Berkshire Hills. Freelove was standing by the wall in front of her door when the stage driver blew his horn.

It was a still nightfall. The gray mountain rose among the crimson seas of the sky, and the motionless pines glimmered in the mellow light. The fragrant arbutus had carpeted the wood and hills, and the cowslips' early leaves trembled like reeds in the running water of the gurgling streams. Winter was dead; the frost spirit had left the atmosphere like an airy temple, with open doors to await the coming of the sylphs of spring. Freelove lingered at the wall; there was something in the air that detained her long after the old stage coach had rattled with its echoing horn down the hills. The people of Cheshire had resolved to celebrate the

election of Jefferson, and Freelove had suggested that they make for the President a great cheese.

Most old New England towns, however sober, had their odd characters, and the merry, freedom-loving community of Cheshire had more than one. But the one whose appearance anywhere most caused all mouths to widen and lips to part at this time was William Brown — "Sweet Billy," as he was called, though why he received this saccharine name we are ignorant. The grandfather of James Fisk, of Erie fame, who used to live in Cheshire, received the name of Conquiddle Fisk — the conquiddle was a bobolink — on account of the lively use that he was wont to make of his tongue, but why William Brown, whose jokes for half a century were the fireside stories of the winter inns, was called "Sweet Billy" is as great a mystery as why "Sam Slick," the clock-maker, was called Sam Slick.

While the happy-hearted Freelove was standing beside the wall, the tall, windmill-like form of Sweet Billy came sidling down the hill.

"Have you heard the news, Billy?" asked Freelove. "Jefferson is inaugurated, and now we are going to make that big cheese of your'n. I'll do my part, Billy."

"And I'll do my part, you may be sure. Mason Brown and I will put into it fifty cows' milk. We will, now. I've got just as big a heart as anybody. Elder Leland says it's as big as an ox."

"But how many cows do you keep, Billy?"

"Me? Lordy! I keep a cow — did n't you know I kept a cow? And cousin Mason, he has forty-nine. That makes fifty."

I need not say that the great cheese was made. All the world knows that. The summer of bobolinks and morning-glories that followed the political spring of happiness in Cheshire saw a great gathering of curds on a certain day, and all the kirtled dames met at Elisha Brown's and compounded the mammoth gift to the Democratic President. It was pressed in a cider mill, and if it did not require four horses to draw it, that number was fastened to the vehicle that brought it from the press where it had been pressed for ten days. It weighed 1,235 pounds, — some accounts say more, — was carried to Hudson and shipped for Washington. Elder Leland went with the great cheese, "preaching," as he said, "all the way."

The stately correspondence between Leland and Jefferson, in offering and accepting the gift, is still

preserved. These were the days when every voter supposed himself to be a born king by right of the Constitution, and it took the old ringing style of writing to express the sentiments of the new monarchs. Jefferson's letter on accepting the great cheese was worthy of the author of "When in the course of human events," etc. Elder Leland, tall and courtly, was well adapted to the dramatic part of the occasion. A grander commoner never entered the Republican Court. Jefferson had often met the great revival preacher in Virginia, for Leland depopulated towns wherever he went. His calling to the ministry, like St. Paul's, had come, as he believed, in the form of a voice out of the skies, and his tongue, to use the old Hebrew simile, common in the old days, had been "touched by a burning coal from the altar." "Convert John Leland," said one to James Madison, "and he will make you a political power," or words to that purport. Madison met Leland and preached to him such a new political Sermon on the Mount that the great revivalist became a ready convert to liberal democracy, and he certainly did much towards leading Madison up the steps toward the Presidency.

There are few preachers like Leland to-day. Elo-

quent as the old Methodist field preachers, elegant and courtly as a Camille Desmoulins, witty as a Swift or a Steele, and far in advance of his times in the liberality of his views, a theological disciple of Roger Williams and Samson Mason, and a political follower of Jefferson — he was not only the most remarkable preacher, but one of the most notable men of his times. He labored as a revivalist in Virginia for many years, but he finally made his home in Cheshire, where he lived to extreme old age.

It was one of the humors of the time to relate events of a pleasing character in the style of the Hebrew Chronicles, and the Chronicle of the Cheshire Cheese was well known. It began: —

"And Jacknips said unto the Cheshirites, 'Behold! the Lord hath put a ruler over us that is after our own hearts. Now let us gather together our curds, and carry it into the Valley of Elisha unto his wine-press, and there make a great cheese that we may make a thank-offering unto the great man.' Now this saying pleased the Cheshirites, so they did as the Jacknips had commanded."

The Cheshire boys seem to have caught the spirit of the old humorists, and to have used it sometimes

without discretion. It was the custom of the times to hold revival meetings in schoolhouses, and indeed preaching in the schoolhouse was the pioneer way of spreading the gospel in New England. It was often easier to secure these schoolhouse preachers of minor gifts and inspirations than to get rid of them after they had settled themselves in these rustic parishes. Among these willing and conscientious men who stayed too long in one place was one Peter Gates, who boarded upon the town. His voluntary schoolhouse pastorate had been a long one, and how to ask him to go became the question of the hour.

"Why don't you give him a call from the Lord to farther usefulness?" asked Sweet Billy. "Stands to reason that Providence must work by means. The Lord must have His messengers."

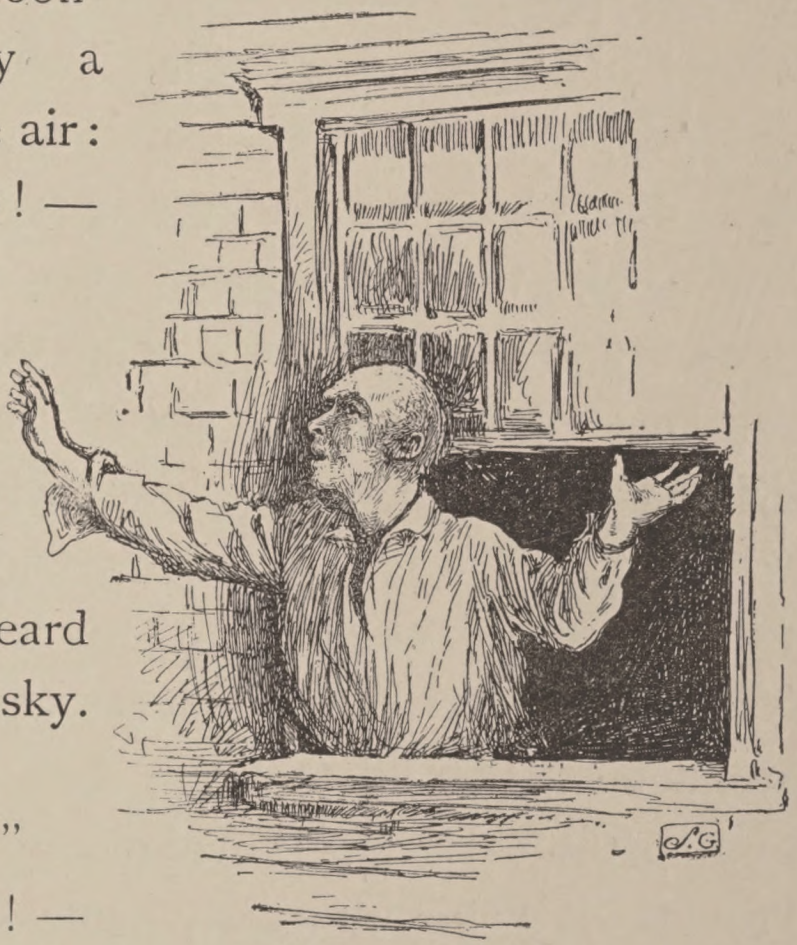
The Cheshire boys thought they might be useful in the matter, and accepted Sweet Billy's views.

One night honest Peter Gates was awakened by a voice from a hilltop, singing perhaps the old Cheshire revival hymn: —

"What joyful sound is this I hear,
Fresh from the mulberry tops?"

The hymn, "There 's a sound going forth from the mulberry trees," was a famous melody in Elder Leland's day.

The good man rose from his bed, raised the window and looked out upon the cool, still hills in the pale moonlight. Presently a voice pierced the air:



"Peter Gates! — Peter Gates! — P–e–t–e–r!"

Peter thought it was a voice from the sky Elder Leland heard voices from the sky. Why not he?

"What, Lord?"

"Peter Gates! — Peter Gates!"

"Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

"Peter Gates, hear ye! Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Peter had not been brought up under Elder Leland's preaching not to heed voices from the

midnight sky. He began to pack his goods the next day and started for some other schoolhouse parish.

Sweet Billy was one of the boys who had been engaged in this dark proceeding. The boys kept this escapade a secret, and Peter Gates told the tale of his "heaven*lie* calling" wherever he went, and people listened with awe to his sermons, as from one who received messages from the skies.

The old Cheshire farms were full of wonder stories, and Sweet Billy among the rest had seen a vision. One of the horses of the Revelation he claimed had appeared to him. He told the story at one of Elder Leland's conference meetings, and after the awful disclosure there were not wanting people who accounted him as among the minor prophets. He said that one dark night, as he was passing the old New Providence graveyard, — New Providence being the early name of Cheshire, — a white horse rose out of the earth and stood in the air and "pawed the stars." This last statement was vivid enough to leave a very distinct impression upon most minds, and Billy never ceased to repeat the story. He was not sure about the interpretation of the vision. He thought that it might mean

that these were the latter days. It gave a man especial distinction in Elder Leland's day to see a vision. A house without a ghost must have been the property of a very commonplace family. A person whom the invisible world did not notice at all would have been obtuse and unimportant indeed. In those days the air was populous with unseen beings, good and bad.

But it was Elder Leland's ghost story that most received attention for many years. The elder was a sound man, and if he heard and saw mysteries, there could be no doubt of the dwellers in the air.

He once told the story to Governor Briggs in his last years, and said that he could never form any natural theory to account for the mystery. To the simple Cheshire farmers he related the marvel something as follows: —

One afternoon there came at the casement of one of his windows a mysterious sound like the wheel of a spinner, whir–r, whir–r, whir–r. He thought it was the wind. The next day at the same hour it came again, and every day at the same hour, as the sun was going down. He examined the window case but nothing could be found. The wheel went on. He had the window case removed;

the spindle still was there. But he still attributed the mysterious noises to the wind or to some unknown natural cause.

One day as his wife was washing at the brook, some distance from the house, the spinning followed her. The mysterious wheel went on by her side during her work under the trees. Then the family felt sure that the noises came from the unseen world.

The spinner at the sunset window now filled them with terror. The noises came at night and the family could not sleep. The children would cry, and the dog and cat run with affright.

One night after the elder had retired, the sounds at the window became terrible and shook the house. The elder turned on his face and prayed. The sounds left the window and came near his room, spinning, spinning, like the wheel of fate. They shook the bedroom door and approached his bed. The elder rose up and exclaimed: —

"In the name of God, depart!"

In a minute all was deep silence, and the mysterious spinner never came again.

Elder Leland used to tell the tale by winter fires, and once when Billy Brown heard it he said:

"Elder, if that story is true, I would n't have anything on my conscience for the world, nor would you. Eyes we can't see watching us, and ears hearing us. O elder, I sometimes think it is dreadful to be a-top of the earth!"

The day after Thanksgiving was a merry-making in Cheshire.

Sweet Billy Brown was usually happy on that day, but it happened that on one memorable year he had not been prosperous, and there fell upon him a deep depression of spirit.

"To-morrer is Thanksgiving," said he on the evening before the holiday, "and I 've got no turkey nor nothin' but puddin' strings. I swanny, it is too bad, after all I 've done to keep things goin', singin' in the choir, and watchin' with the sick, and huskin' for one bushel in ten. I swanny, it 's too bad!"

As he ambled along there were bright lights on all the hillsides. The chimneys were smoking with their roaring fires. The late farm wains were rumbling here and there with their loads of corn and pumpkins.

"I 've done nothin'," he said, "that Providence should pass by me. I 've never done nothin' — no,

that 's a fact, I ain't — perhaps that 's the very reason."

"Quit! Quit!"

What was that? Turkeys. Telling one another that there was a stranger over the wall. Talking softly, just as they did to their young ones in spring.

Sweet Billy looked over the wall. There, on one of the low limbs of an apple tree, were at least a dozen, perhaps twenty, turkeys.

"All them!" said Sweet Billy. "It 's too bad, I do vum!"

"Quit! Quit!"

"No, I won't. You need n't say 'quit, quit' to me. That 's what all the world says to me: 'Quit, quit,' to me, just because I 'm poor. It 's too bad — Thanksgiving evening too!"

Suddenly he clapped both hands on his head as though an electrical thought had struck him or a crown fallen upon him.

"I 'm goin' to make Captain Daniel give me one of those turkeys," said he. He slapped his hands on his knees. "I am, now."

He felt in his pocket and drew out a red string, a piece of twisted red yarn, such as the farmers'

PRESENTLY CAPTAIN DANIEL APPEARED.

daughters used to knit "comforters," as neck scarfs were then called.

He cast himself over the wall, which was no great effort with his tall limbs, and approached the "red-duck" tree, where the turkeys were roosting. He surveyed the bountiful tree with its lavish display of red apples and ornithology. He went up to the largest gobbler and tied the red string around its leg, notwithstanding that several nervous lady turkeys seemed to implore him to "quit, quit."

Then Sweet Billy went thoughtfully to Captain Daniel's door and banged the brass knocker in a most alarming way. Presently Captain Daniel appeared, candle in hand, looking like one of the patriarchs; and a Puritan patriarch of the Baptist kind he was.

"Say, Mister Brown" —

"What can be the matter?" asked Captain Daniel. "None of your folks sick, I hope?"

"Say, now, I want you to come out and look over your flock of turkeys, and if there 's one with a red string tied on to its leg, you just hand him over to me."

"I have n't seen any stray turkey anywhere.

Did n't notice any when I fed mine. Who tied the red string around the turkey's leg?"

"I did."

"You did, hey? Come in. 'T is prayer-time. After prayers I 'll give ye some supper and some pies to carry home to your folks. Hepsey 's been cookin' an amazin' lot of mince pies, and she said that she 'd like to give away some, only if there was anyone to give them to. Mighty free-hearted woman is Hepsey, you know. She 'd be good if there 's anybody to be good to. But, la, me, everybody up here among the hills has everything he needs. It 's sin and laziness that makes poverty. I guess you 're about as poor as any of 'em."

Sweet Billy went in. Captain Daniel opened the Bible on the great oak table, and drew the tallow candle up to it and read a chapter; then took off his spectacles.

"Goin' to pray now?" said Sweet Billy. Captain Daniel was one of Elder Leland's deacons.

"Yes. Is there any special blessin' that you want to ask?"

"Yes; that my Thanksgiving may not go by without any turkey."

"Why, bless ye, no! That would be perfectly

heathenish. If you don't find that turkey with a red string, I 'll let you have one of mine and answer the prayer myself."

Then good Captain Daniel prayed, and the great fire roared, and all the family and Sweet Billy joined in the final " Amen."

Sweet Billy rose straight up as soon as the " Amen " was said.

" Captain Daniel," he said, " let's go out and see if we find anything of that old turkey gobbler with a red string. I should know the string anywhere; I know I should."

" And while you are gone, I 'll just make up a basket of all kinds of things for your family," said Hepsey, the captain's wife. " La, me, my closets are all running over. We 've cooked as much as two families could eat for a year."

Captain Daniel and Sweet Billy went out to the door.

" Don't need no lantern," said Captain Daniel, " 't is as light as day. Let 's go out into the orchard and look around. You say you tied that red string onto the turkey's leg yourself ? "

" Yes, I did."

" Well, there he is, then. I do declare, there he

is! Cur'us now, ain't it? I 've found him the very first thing. A bouncer, ain't he? I did n't know that you kept turkeys. There he is, grand as old King Solomon. Take him. He 's your 'n."

Sweet Billy took down the fat gobbler very carefully.

"I do declare, it does look like one of my own," said Captain Daniel, "but I 've got several flocks of turkeys, and you say that you tied that red string on to the turkey's leg yourself. So I must put your word against my eyes. What a bright night this is!"

Sweet Billy took the fat gobbler on one arm and Hepsey's basket on the other and then said: —

"This is a pretty good world, after all, considerin' we 're all poor sinners. Good-by, Deacon — Captain Daniel — this has been a wonderful answer to prayer. The ways of Providence are many, ain't they now? as Elder Leland says. The elder knows. He 's seen ghosts."

As Sweet Billy ambled along towards his unfruitful home, the fat gobbler kept repeating, —

"Quit! Quit!"

"Don't you sass me," he once answered to the knight of the red string. "You 're just like all

the rest of the world. It 's you that 'll have to quit. There now!"

There was one thing above all others which, as we have intimated, Sweet Billy feared. It was a ghost. Elder Leland's sermons, even in revival times, failed to awaken his conscience to proper resolution, but the mention of the elder's ghost story would bring him to a speedy repentance and tearful confession of his sins.

He told his poor wife a strange story about the gift of the turkey — a story that might have withstood one of the good elder's theological sermons, but not a recital of the wonders of the invisible world as they were once made manifest in the Cheshire parsonage.

Thanksgiving afternoon was one of those golden splendors that only fall in late autumn among the hills. Captain Daniel and his wife Hepsey might have been seen walking among the cawing bluejays and the falling walnuts over the hill of withered grasses towards the cabinlike home of Sweet Billy Brown.

"Let 's go in," said Hepsey. "Our house does so overflow with everything that I do declare that I 'm tired of my own cooking, and I 'm glad of the

chance to taste of something somewhere else." With this pleasing reflection the two came to Sweet Billy's door. The family were at dinner.

"Well, well, have n't you come to dine with poor folks? I declare now!" said Sweet Billy as he opened the door under the faded morning-glory vines. He spoke cheerfully, but there was a look of constraint on his face.

"Well, I 'm proper glad to see you all. I never did see such a fat turkey as that one is. I told wife just to tie the red string on his leg again when he was done — kind o' legendary like. I don't feel overwell to-day, did n't sleep well last night."

The turkey did indeed seem to be excellently roasted.

"Now sit down," said Sweet Billy, "and help yourselves just as if it was your own. Sit down to the table just to keep us company. Deacon, you just say grace. I 'd kind o' hate to do it, considerin' all things; I did n't stop to pray when we sat down to eat, the Lord forgive me. This turkey did n't come exactly like the Bible's quails. Deacon, I ain't no better than I ought to be, if I am a member of the elder's church!"

No sooner was the Thanksgiving prayer ended

than Hepsey gave a start and moved back her chair. She was looking at the turkey. Her gray eyes were enlarging and all mouths opened.

"What is it, Hepsey?" asked the deacon. "Hey, Hepsey?"

"Billy, Billy Brown," said Hepsey, "when did you tie that string on that turkey's leg?"

"That's a dreadful solemn question," said Sweet Billy. "Just let me carve that turkey first and then I 'll tell ye."

Billy pressed the great carving-knife against the breast of the not very compactly stuffed turkey. "Quit!" —

Billy dropped the knife. He had been suspicious from the first that the turkeys on the apple trees might have been speaking to him after the manner of Balaam's animal, about which he had heard Elder Leland preach. He stared at the puffed-up turkey and then said: —

"How that turkey does talk! Animals used to talk in the Scriptur' times. Balaam's did. Now about that there red string" —

"Yes, about the red string, Billy," said Mrs. Brown, her cap border bobbing, and her face all glowing with interest. "How about it, Billy?"

"Well, it 's kind o' mysterious; what made you ask me that? There 's nothing out o' the way, if I did tie a red string around a turkey's leg, now is there?"

Sweet Billy stood with his knife raised.

Suddenly there came another rap at the door. Billy dropped the knife and an expression of relief passed over his face. He opened the door inquiringly, then started back and exclaimed: "Lordy — the spinner!" But his senses quickly flew back again.

"Elder, is that you? Now I am honored. Elder Leland, as I live!"

The tall form of the Virginia revivalist stood there with a huge basket on his arm.

"My wife sent me," said the courtly preacher, "and the Lord put it into her heart to put these things for you into this basket, and you will make us both grateful if you will accept them with thankful hearts. Deacon Brown, I am glad to see you here. Feed the flock of God; that 's right, Deacon Brown! Feed" —

"The flock of God!" exclaimed Sweet Billy with a sudden twinge of conscience. "What 'll I say now?" He rolled his eyes up to the bare ceiling.

"The mercies of the Lord are from everlasting to everlasting," said Deacon Brown.

Sweet Billy was glad to hear that.

"Mercies!" said he. "That is very comfortin'. Don't go, elder. What's your pucker? Sit down, All our chairs are occupied. Here, take wife's chair and she'll take mine."

The tall elder sat down.

"Now we will go on with the dinner."

"You raised a fat turkey this year," said Elder Leland. "I'm glad, for it's a sign of outward prosperity."

"I did n't raise that turkey, Elder. It kind o' fell to me."

"Whose heart was so large? It was He who sent the quails to wandering Israel. The skies, the earth, and seas are His messengers! It was" —

"No, elder, I hardly think — I don't know. You can't tell, but I don't think it was."

The short day began to fall into shadow before four o'clock. The fireless November sun went into a gray cloud and it was early candle-lighting. Billy had seemed very absent and restless all the afternoon, and as Elder Leland and Deacon Brown

were discussing some Hebraic theme, he drew up his bench to the elder's and suddenly tapped him on the knees.

"Elder?"

"What is your burden, my good brother?"

"Elder, do you think that animals talk now as they did in old miracle times?"

"Only when spirits speak through them."

"Spirits! Lordy! Elder?"

"Say on!"

"You don't think that it was spirits that haunted your old house — now, do you? It was the wind in the casement."

"Then how did the spinner come to my wife when she was washing at the brook, and spin and spin, and whir–r, whir–r, whir–r–r–r–r?"

The word whir–r caused Billy's eyes to dilate.

"Sure enough, elder, sure enough. I have got some things on my mind. They must come out. I can't stand it — I can't now, elder."

"There is nothing covered but what will be revealed, Billy. Confession is good for the soul."

"Elder, listen." The cottage room was very still. "Elder, that warn't no horse of the Revelation what appeared to me, as I said in meetin'. 'T was

the old stage horse eatin' apples off the high limbs of the apple tree. He h'isted himself up so as to get the apples. A horse is mighty fond of apples, you know, and that old horse, after he'd eat the apples off the lower limbs of that scraggly old tree in the graveyard, put his two feet up on one of the limbs, and lifted himself up until he looked to be as tall as the stars."

"But you told that tale in covenant meeting, Billy, and said it was a vision."

"Heaven forgive me! Elder, I've got something more on my mind. It was the boys that called Peter Gates, the exhorter, to further usefulness. I was one of 'em. We got up on the top of the house. It was n't the Lord. My conscience is all on fire. Heaven forgive me, elder!"

"I hope that Heaven will be merciful in that case, Billy."

"And deacon, O Deacon Brown! I must tell all. That there story of the invisible spinner makes me shake so, that there will not be a sin left for seed before I get through. Deacon, open your ears now. It was I that tied the red string onto that turkey's leg — I, O Deacon Brown!"

"Yes, yes, Billy, that is what you said."

"When did you do it?" asked Mrs. Brown with staring eyes.

"That night — just before I knocked at your door!"

The group sat silent. Billy buried his face in his hands. Then good Elder Leland said: —

"You see the Lord has touched him. Let us all sing my evening hymn!"

Elder Leland's evening hymn was an almost Ambrosian strain: —

The day has passed and gone,
The evening shades appear;
Oh, may we all remember well
The night of death draws near.

The elder closed his eyes, leaned back, and lifted his face. His voice rose clear, like prophet tones, and his face wore a luminous expression, as he sang his own words, which all the world knows now.

The hymn left peace in all hearts.

"Deacon Brown," said the elder, "Thanksgiving days should be forgiving days. Brother William, we are glad that your conscience is free. May no mysterious spinner ever haunt your household! Good night."

The three gracious people moved away in the shadows from the humble door of the faded morning-glory vines. The stars were gleaming in the fringes of the sky, and the great moon, like a night sun, was lifting her brow over the hills. The Thanksgiving was over, leaving behind it a grateful memory of the high tide of rural prosperity, and a quaint story for the old New England taverns. Simple, happy times were those old days in the Berkshire Hills, and the beautiful Thanksgiving in Elder Leland's day. Only a poet could do them justice. Two mysteries were explained, but Elder Leland's ghost story remains a mystery still.

THE BOY DIVER.

BY

LIEUT. H. P. WHITMARSH.

THE BOY DIVER.

IT was a dreadfully hot day. The rays of the North Australian sun poured down unmercifully, and the white sand of the dry creek bed reflected and intensified it. On either side of the creek the cockatoos and parrots chattered incessantly, and the forest of mangroves drooped its leaves as if in prayer for the return of the tide to cool its tortuous roots.

The course of the creek for about a mile inland is winding and narrow, without a sign of human life or habitation; then it takes a sharp turn and opens out into a large circular space, fringed with mangroves and almost surrounded with low sand-hills, upon which a few rough shanties are scattered. Inland Harbor — as this place is called — is the retreat of the pearl divers; their harbor of refuge in stormy weather, their rendezvous during spring tides for wood and water, and their dry dock in case of accident. On the day of which I speak the only occupants of Inland Harbor were a schooner and

three or four luggers; the tide, as I said before, was out and the boats leaned heavily over on their sides.

One of the luggers, whose stern proclaimed to the world that she was the Norma, of Cossack, showed unusual signs of life. Her Malay crew were busy tautening up the rigging, hoisting water-casks aboard, and generally making things ship-shape. Over the side a white man was rapidly slathering hot pitch over some newly calked seams, and everything looked as if she intended to leave the creek with the next tide.

Jack Munro, the Norma's captain, was an Australian to the backbone. He was a tall, good-looking fellow, with a bronzed face and a pair of bright blue eyes that made friends for him wherever he went. Strong and lithe as an athlete, he was equal to the hardest task and was possessed of a large share of that virtue which is called pluck. Brought up on a sheep-station away in the back-blocks, he had learned when quite a youngster to handle sheep, drive bullock, and crack a stock whip; but this, the sum-total of up-country life, had palled upon his restless spirit, and at the age of fifteen he left home in search of a more adventurous life.

Making his way directly to the pearl fisheries on the west coast, he obtained work aboard one of the schooners, where he remained two years; at the end of which time having accumulated a nice little sum of money, he invested it in the pearling lugger Norma.

Jack had now owned the Norma about three weeks, and was much disappointed when, on his first trip out to the pearling grounds, she had sprung so bad a leak that he was obliged to put back for repairs. After much delay he secured the services of the only carpenter on the coast, and, with a loss of two weeks, was at last ready to start to sea again.

Joe, his driver, and six Malays, who composed the crew of the Norma, had come with her, Jack having kept the old hands when he bought the boat.

Now the diver of a pearling boat is a highly privileged character; no sooner was the Norma high and dry in the creek than Joe, the cockney, as he was familiarly called, struck for higher wages.

All Jack's efforts to keep Joe were unavailing. Jack was paying Joe the usual rate of wages for a first-class diver, but Joe had an idea that he was

dealing with a green boy who could not do without him, and he proposed to take advantage of the situation. On the bank of the creek Joe sat watching the preparations aboard the Norma.

The flood tide slowly began to fill up the deeper places in the harbor, then a thin wave crept toward the boat and lapped her sides; soon it deepened until the dingy floated, and then, without warning, the Norma straightened up and swung to her anchor.

As she did so our hero stepped on deck and ordered the sails loosed, and, having seen everything in readiness for a start, he jumped into the dingy and sculled ashore to Joe.

Running the nose of the boat up on to the sandy beach, he said: "Come, Joe, get into the bow and I'll take you off. We're going to sail in a few minutes."

"Goin' ter sail," returned the cockney surlily. "Wot for?"

Jack felt his temper begin to rise at this query; but he kept it down and merely replied: —

"Now, Joe, I'm not going to argue with you; the calking is finished and the Norma is as tight as a bottle, and we must get out of the creek this tide,

or there won't be another chance until next spring. Come on board!"

"Now, look here," said Joe, putting on a wise look; "Hi don't go for ter say as 'ow as wot you ain't a purty decent bloke ter work for, but Hi do go for ter say as 'ow the Norma hain't a-going hout o' the creek this 'ere tide. Yer don't suppose as 'ow a gent of leshur, like myself, 's a-going to work like a common laborer, w'en 'e 'as money in 'is pocket, do ye? Ho, no! Hi did n't come all the w'y from Lundin ter be laufed at, ye know."

Jack was rather staggered at this. If Joe persisted in staying ashore, what in the world was to be done? It was plain that he could not go to sea without a diver.

"Ha! ha!" laughed Joe, for he saw he had the advantage. "Yer can't go out without yer 'umble servant, Captain Munro." Here he touched his cap with mock humility.

"Indeed!" said Jack, making a sudden resolve. "You 'll see if I can't do without you, if you don't hurry up. Are you coming aboard?"

"My hanswer, Capt'n, his no!"

"All right, Joe, you 'll be sorry for this some day. There 's the two pounds that is owing you;" and

Jack flung two pound notes on the sand. "And if anyone asks you where the Norma has gone, you may tell them to the grounds; and if they inquire who her diver is, you can say it's Jack Munro."

Joe burst into a loud laugh of derision as the dingy left the strand and shot toward the Norma; but his laugh died away when he saw the breeze fill the lugger's sails and carry her with increasing speed down the creek and out of sight.

Within twenty-four hours the Norma had dropped anchor on the pearling grounds. Let me picture this place to you. Hundreds of miles from the abode of white men stretches a long, sandy coast, almost destitute of animal life or vegetation. To the south and east is one vast yellow desert; to the north and west roll the blue waters of the Indian Ocean. Beyond that sand roams the wild and savage bushman of Australia; beneath that sea sweeps the savage tintorea — the man-eating shark of the Orient; and in those depths are sought the gems to glow in future diadems.

The following morning, with the first streaks of dawn, Jack was alert and chose one of the crew, named Ketchee, to act as tender. Now the tender is he who manages the boat, holds the life or signal

line, and looks after the general safety of the diver when at work.

After putting on a thick suit of flannels, Jack then proceeded, with Ketchee's help, to get into the weighty diving clothes. The dress proper is a waterproof suit, complete in one piece, and as the only way into it is through the neck hole, Jack had to slide his long legs in, and gradually work himself down to the bottom; then his hands and wrists were soaped, so that he might thrust them through the tight rubber wristlets on the sleeves, thus leaving his hands outside the dress. Next the corselet was fastened over his shoulders, and the helmet screwed to it; the leaden-soled boots were strapped on, the back and chest-weights added, the life-line attached, and Jack was ready for his trip to the bottom of the sea.

Stepping onto the rope ladder, which hung over the boat's side, Ketchee put the final touches to the cumbrous arrangement by screwing up the face glass, and giving the order to pump away. All was now in readiness for the descent.

Unscrewing the escape valve partly, in order that the air should not accumulate in the dress, and prevent him from sinking, Jack grasped the guiding line firmly and dropped.

Splash! The water tightened around him, the air whizzed in at the top of the helmet, and his ears began to ache, until he almost cried out with the pain. Down, swiftly down he went; would he never touch the bottom? At last he reached it with a bang, the pain ceased, and he scrambled to his feet full of curiosity.

A wondrous sight greeted Jack as he looked around. From the monotony of the sea and sky above he had dropped through a few fathoms of crystal water into a vast, cool conservatory of tropical sea plants, where flowers and ferns, palms and shells, corals and sponges in quaintest forms and brilliant colors lay undisturbed by storms and made a perfect fairyland. Everything was magnified to such an extent that it seemed to Jack as if he were in a land of giants; and he found it a curious sensation to grasp at an object with both hands and find that he could easily hold it between his finger and thumb. Even the wee rainbow fish that live among the corals looked as large as herring, and a turtle in the distance seemed the size of an ox.

On he walked, forgetful of everything but the novelty and beauty of the scene. Now through a field of waving flowers, tall and graceful and rainbow-

hued; now over a patch of whitest sand, spangled with blue starfish; now through a grove of swaying corallines — mermaid's fans — pink and white.

A signal from Ketchee reminded him that he was still of the earth, and, answering that he was all right, he rested for a moment in the bowl of a monster coral cup, whose surface was resplendent with purple lichen and vivid anemonæ. Jack by this time was perspiring profusely and breathing in quick, short gasps; but he was loth to ascend, and, a curious growth having attracted his attention, he walked over to examine it. It proved to be one of those wonderful sponge growths known as the "cup of Neptune," and, hiding within its bowl Jack discovered a specimen of the rare and valuable orange-colored cowrie. This Jack stored carefully away in his bag, and having found where to look for them, he soon possessed himself of several more. So intent was he in his search that he did not realize that he was descending, and it surprised him immensely when, on taking his eyes off the bottom, he saw that he was in a hollow and almost within the entrance of a submarine cavern. A number of large fish, which Jack recognized as rock cod, darted out at his approach, and peering

into the semi-darkness of the cave, he saw some large, round objects on its white floor.

Pearl shells, thought Jack, and his heart beat quicker at the prospect of a full bag, but he hesitated, for there was an uncanny feeling about the place, and he could not prevent a vague apprehension that something might come out of the darkness within. But Jack had too much courage to be frightened at his own fancies, so he boldly entered and rapidly filled his bag. When it would hold no more he made his way out again; and as he began to feel faint, he gave the signal to be pulled up, and in a few moments was drinking in the pure air of the ocean.

Jack's first descent proved quite a success; for upon opening the shells he found three pearls which were worth in all about fifty dollars. The shells themselves were also of value, being worth about fifty cents per pair. After this our hero experienced little trouble in the pursuit of his calling and soon became an expert diver.

One evening Jack and a diver from another lugger were lying under the awning, or the after-part of the Norma's deck, enjoying the cool breeze and talking over the scant news of the fleet.

Jack's companion was a big, stalwart man of middle age, known by the name of Morrison, who had befriended the young diver on many occasions. The two had struck up a strong friendship, and their boats were seldom seen far apart.

"Say, Morrison," said Jack, "is there no way of telling whether a shell has pearls in it?"

"No way that I know of, unless you open it," was the reply.

"Well," persisted Jack, "are there any shells that are more likely to have pearls in them than others?"

"Yes," replied Morrison, "and no. You see it's this way. Of course an old worm-eaten shell is more apt to have them than a young shell; but at the same time some of the largest stones have been found in these same small shells, so that you really can't tell anything about it. It's all a matter of luck. But aren't you contented with what you have been doing, Jack? I thought you had been fairly fortunate."

"Oh, I can't complain," said Jack. "I've picked up eight tons of shells in six months, but I don't seem to run across any good-sized pearls. I've got plenty of seed pearls, but not one among the lot that's worth a fiver."

"Some day you may strike it," remarked Morrison hopefully; "but, anyway, whether you do or not, it 's no use to worry, my son."

"No, I know that," replied Jack. "If I could only make one good haul, I 'd chuck the whole business. It 's too risky for a fellow to stay at long. Look at poor Vinton that died in his dress the other day, and the Kanaka diver who fouled on the bottom and has n't been able to get up yet. Look at the lot of fellows who are deaf from diving, and the numbers who are lost every time a cyclone visits the coast."

"As far as that goes," said Morrison, "accidents happen everywhere, and it 's not such a bad life, after all. A fellow can always make a good living at it, and he stands a chance to make his pile any day. I admit," continued he with a twinkle in his eye, "that it 's a business that has its ups and downs, but there 's one great thing about it — you can't stay down very long."

The two men remained talking until the bell of a neighboring schooner rang out the hour of ten, and then Morrison hauled his dingy up alongside and pulled off to his boat.

"Good night," sung out Jack as his friend disappeared in the darkness.

"Good night," answered Morrison. "Look out for the big clams."

"All right," said Jack, laughing at what he took to be one of Morrison's jokes.

But before many hours had passed over Jack's head he appreciated that Morrison's last words were no jest but a warning.

A few days after this conversation, while Jack was working below, he ran across a place where pearl shells seemed more plentiful than usual, and, according to the custom in such cases, he gave three pulls and a shake on the lifeline, as a signal for Ketchee to drop the Norma's anchor, so as to allow him to thoroughly cover the ground.

Previous to this the boat had been slowly drifting with the current, Jack following her. The "patch," as places where shells are plenty are called, was a veritable submarine garden, abounding in all kinds of sponge, coral, and other sea growths, some of them ten and twelve feet high and twenty-five feet around the base, a place where Jack had to watch his lifeline and airpipes very closely. for fear they might get entangled among the multitu-

dinous stems and tracery. The shells were thick and in a few minutes Jack had his bag full to overflowing; so, hauling down sufficient slack on the lifeline, he tide the bag to it and signaled Ketchee to pull it up, who, having emptied it, returned it in the same way. In this manner bag after bag went up, until the total number of shells mounted to several hundreds, and Jack began to feel tired. Gathering shells at this rate is something like, thought he, as he shook the sweat off his face. One more bag full and I shall have to go up for a mouthful of fresh air.

Down came the empty bag again, and off Jack started after three or four large shells that lay half-hidden in the shadow of a coral cup.

He stooped to pick them up, and as he did so a shoal of fish darted past his face glass, a mighty wave seemed to strike him and rolled him over and over on the rock bottom, and everything became dark as night.

A nameless terror took possession of Jack for a moment, as he lay half-stunned among the long sea grasses, for his first thought was that he had been stricken blind; but, as he picked himself up, to his unspeakable joy the light gradually came

JACK FELT A VISE-LIKE GRIP THAT CHAINED HIM TO THE SPOT.

back again, and he saw that the darkness had been caused by the stirring up of the thin layer of mud that covered the ocean floor.

As the tide cleared it away Jack would have given the signal to be pulled up had he not noticed a second cloud of mud approaching, out of which, to his horror, there emerged two enormous sharks fighting over the body of a native diver which they were rending to pieces with lightninglike dashes.

Jack knew better than to try to ascend, for he knew well that these dreaded monsters of the deep have human nature enough in them to want a thing as soon as they see it is being taken away from them; so without more ado he took to his heels and ran for his very life.

Suddenly Jack felt his right foot slip as if he had trodden on an anemone, and at the same instant there closed around his leg a viselike grip that chained him to the spot.

Finding himself in the fatal clutches of a monster Tridacna, an exaggerated species of clam which measured three feet in length and weighed some five hundred pounds, and exposed to the mercy of the sharks, should they come that way, our hero for the moment lost all control of himself, and crying

aloud with fear and pain, he tore frantically at the corrugated edges of the shell which held him.

Finally Jack with an effort calmed himself, and no sooner had he regained his presence of mind than he whipped out his sheath knife and commenced to cut vigorously at the interior of the mollusk, the shell being held partly open by his leg, knowing well that if he would reach the heart of the fish, the muscles would relax and leave him free.

As he slashed and probed into the flabby mass, his knife clicked against something hard, and with a diver's instinct he put his hand down and felt for it.

The next moment he drew forth an immense pearl, perfect in shape, color, and lustre. And then by degrees the shell opened until Jack was able to step out — a prisoner no longer.

To signal and be pulled up and out was the work of a few minutes, and that night there was great excitement on the pearling grounds over Jack's lucky find.

Within a month Jack had sold out everything and had returned to that up-country life which at one time he so much despised. His great pearl sold for a handsome sum of money, and he invested

it in a sheep run adjoining his father's, where he is to-day the owner of half a million pure-bred merinos.

There is nothing he enjoys so much as to spin yarns about his diving days, but when he is asked if he would go through it all again, he shakes his head and says: "No, I rather think that sheep are good enough for me."

THE CRUSHER VS. THE TRITONS.

BY

E. S. WINFIELD.

THE CRUSHER VS. THE TRITONS.

FORTY — love — and out — bah! Bother! There it goes again. That's the very last stroke at tennis that I will do to-day, so there!"

And Bartholomew Clark (otherwise "Batty") gave his racquet a vicious toss into the tennis net, and flung himself down under the spreading pine tree, where a group of boys had been watching the game.

And a most unequal contest it had been, too, for Batty was short and stout, while his opponent was a tall, athletic, merry-faced lad, — Fred Randall by name, — who now stood looking down on the boys and carelessly twirling his racquet.

"Come, Batty, don't get mad over such a trifle," said one of the boys. "What else could you expect, when you have your short legs and arms against Fred's long ones, to say nothing about Fred's record as a tennis player?"

"Who is mad? I am not, only I don't want to play any more, and I don't want to talk about it either," growled Batty.

"Oh, you don't? Then we will talk about the yacht race billed for to-morrow. Will that please your majesty any better?"

"No, I don't want to talk about that either," said Batty, making a heroic effort to cling to the severe expression of countenance which is wholly unnatural to him and which is rapidly degenerating into a grin.

"Bless the boy, what ails him? Digestion must be out of order," suggests a voice in the group.

"Digestion?" in scorn from another boy. "Say head, and you will come nearer the truth. Nothing but downright insanity would ever reduce Batty to the condition of not wanting to talk."

"That 's it, go it," said Batty encouragingly; "I can stand it, but when you know what I do about the race to-morrow, you won't feel much more like talking than I do;" and then he smiles in a mysterious way, calculated and intended to raise the curiosity of the boys to a painful height.

He succeeded beyond his highest expectations in arousing their curiosity, and they crowded around him, eager to learn what his mystic looks and words meant. When he thought he had held them in

suspense long enough, he leaned forward and said slowly and impressively : —

" 'The Crusher' has returned."

His words caused a total collapse on the part of all the boys, and they fell back on the grass in different stages of surprise and wrath.

" The Crusher," be it known, was a youth from New York, Daniel Morton by name, whose father had bought a cottage at the Neck, and there the family had spent the preceding summer.

He had won his nickname from his habit of snubbing the boys and deriding anything belonging to Boston, and asserting that the centre of wit, education, wealth, and general knowledge was New York.

He was tall and thin and blond, wore an eyeglass, and said " gad " and " deah boy," and in fact was everything that a healthy, fun-loving, frank-hearted boy detests.

With all this against him, he owned a yacht, a fast, handsome little sloop, and was himself a clever sailor, but he had spoiled what little favor he might have won from the boys by bragging of what his Petrel could do in the way of sailing and beating the other yachts.

The boys had borne it all the previous summer, and had loathed and detested "The Crusher," as they called him, with all the strength of their beings. So far this summer he had failed to materialize, and rumor had whispered that he was to summer in the Yellowstone, and now here he was to vex and harass the boys during all of another summer.

"And is he going to race the Petrel to-morrow, Batty?" asked a dark-eyed boy on the edge of the group.

"Is he? That is just what he is going to do. Besides, he has openly bragged that nary a blessed one of us stands any kind of a show against his old Petrel."

"That settles it for me, then," retorted he with the dark eyes.

"If he races his yacht, I don't race mine."

"Nor I! Nor I!" chorused several voices.

Fred Randall had not taken any part in the talk about the race, nor had he said that he should not enter his yacht, so as he was one of the most popular of the young captains and yacht owners, his opinion must be had, and if not volunteered must be demanded. So as he was still dumb amid the

clamor of voices, one of the boys leaned over and nudging him said: —

"Why don't you speak up, Freddy, and say that you won't race either?"

"Why don't I?" retorted Fred, turning his handsome face to the group, his gray eyes blazing with suppressed excitement. "Because I 'm going to; nothing, possible to avoid, would hinder me from racing the Banshee to-morrow. If we don't any of us race to-morrow, he will have good cause to say that we are afraid of him. Race? If he crosses the line to-morrow before I have even reached the can buoy, I 'll sail over every inch of that course, just to show him that if I am a duffer at handling a yacht, I am not a coward."

"Good for you, Fred!" said a voice. "We 'll back you and the Banshee every time."

"Oh, I say, boys," said the dark-eyed youth, again coming to the fore, "let 's play a joke on 'the Crusher.' He thinks all the yachts are entered for the race, as of course they are. Well, let 's all draw out except Fred and the Banshee, and leave the two yachts to fight it out between them. Daniel will be frothing mad, but that will be all the better fun. Eh? How does that strike the crowd?"

The boys looked inquiringly at Fred, who stood thoughtfully swinging his racquet, but no one ventured to speak until Batty chimed in : —

" Yes, let her go, Fred ; we 'll beat the very boots off ' the Crusher,' and if we find we are going to lose the race, we 'll lead him a chase out among the ledges, that he don't know much about, and wreck his old Petrel to splinters."

" We will do nothing of the sort," retorted Fred indignantly. " I said I should race the Banshee, and I shall ; and if all the rest draw out, I shall still race all the same. Still I shall be perfectly honorable about it, and if I am beaten, there is nobody going to be badly hurt. Because Daniel Morton is a snob is no reason that Fred Randall should be a rascal."

And swinging on his heel, Fred marched off, leaving the other boys still undecided as to what they would or would n't do on the morrow.

The day of the race came, hot and bright, but with a strong sou'west breeze that chopped up the sea and took the yachts in the harbor along at a good speed.

All the boys put a great deal of faith in Fred and the Banshee, for many a race had that small sloop won under the skilful hand of her skipper.

Apart from Fred, her crew consisted of Neil Howard and Rex Burdett (known as "Birdie"), both boys being clever young sailors, and Batty, whom they took along as "shifting ballast," according to Birdie.

The race was set for two o'clock, but long before that hour the harbor was alive with small boats, tacking back and forth, trying small races with each other, and evidently intent on the business of the day.

With all these yachts flying back and forth it was impossible for Daniel to know that he was to meet but one in the race, although he well knew that, however many boats were racing, it was the Banshee that he had most to watch and fear.

On one long tack down the harbor the Petrel passed close to the bows of the Banshee, on the end of whose bowsprit Neil was perched, wrestling with a refractory hitch in the jib, while Batty was backed against the mast watching the operation. As the two boats were close together, Daniel leaned out over the stern, still grasping the tiller of the Petrel, and bestowed a look of supercilious scorn on the Banshee, from stem to stern.

"La, see him," said Batty in derision. "Acts as

if he owned the earth. But you just wait till the day is over.

'Sing boo to you! Pooh pooh to you!
Sing hey to you! Good day to you!
And that's what we shall say.'"

And Batty danced and snapped his fingers, after the manner of Bunthorne in the absurd operetta of "Patience" — a performance that caused Neil to laugh till he lost his hold on the bowsprit and nearly fell headlong in the harbor.

At the warning-gun, the yachts all hovered closer to the starting line in front of the clubhouse as if a fleet was to cross at the next report.

"Bang!" went the starting gun. There was a breathless pause, and then from the clustered group of yachts one white sloop made a mad rush for the line and with a graceful sweep rounded across at the very farthest point to windward possible, and was away like an arrow out, straight out, for the long stretch of west beach far across the bay.

When Daniel saw that out of that whole fleet of small yachts but one had started in the race, for a moment he lost his self-possession. Then he grasped the situation and, with an inward resolve to

get even with the boys who had fooled him so nicely, he swung across the line in pursuit of the flying Banshee.

On they went, straight on, the water flying from their bows and gurgling away in broad, ever-widening wakes from their sterns.

"A stern chase is a long chase," goes the old sea proverb, and so it seemed to the Petrel, for though she tore through the water like smoke, it was hard for her to catch up the lead that the Banshee had gained at the start.

"Gee–whiz! that Petrel has some go in her after all," chirped Batty from the conspicuous position he held on the rail of the Banshee.

"Bartholomew Clark, get down from that rail!" said Fred in an intense tone. "Lie down flat like Neil, or go into the cabin and stay, but don't you take a scrap of wind out of that sail."

"Ugh! This is a great way to see a yacht race, groveling here on my stomach," growled Batty as he obeyed Fred's command.

"Well, you see you take wind out of the sail and we cannot spare it," explained Birdie.

"Bother the wind!" retorted Batty. "If you are so hard up as that, perhaps I'd better blow on

the sail" — a bit of sarcasm that only met with a grin from Neil.

When the Banshee rounded the red can buoy, her rival was still astern of her, but gaining fast, and at the present rate of speed would soon overhaul and pass her.

Suddenly Batty (who, with eyes glued to the Petrel, was hanging like a leech to the rails of the Banshee) cried in wonder: "See there, Fred! What is 'the Crusher' up to? He is n't aiming for the buoy at all; he is all off the mark."

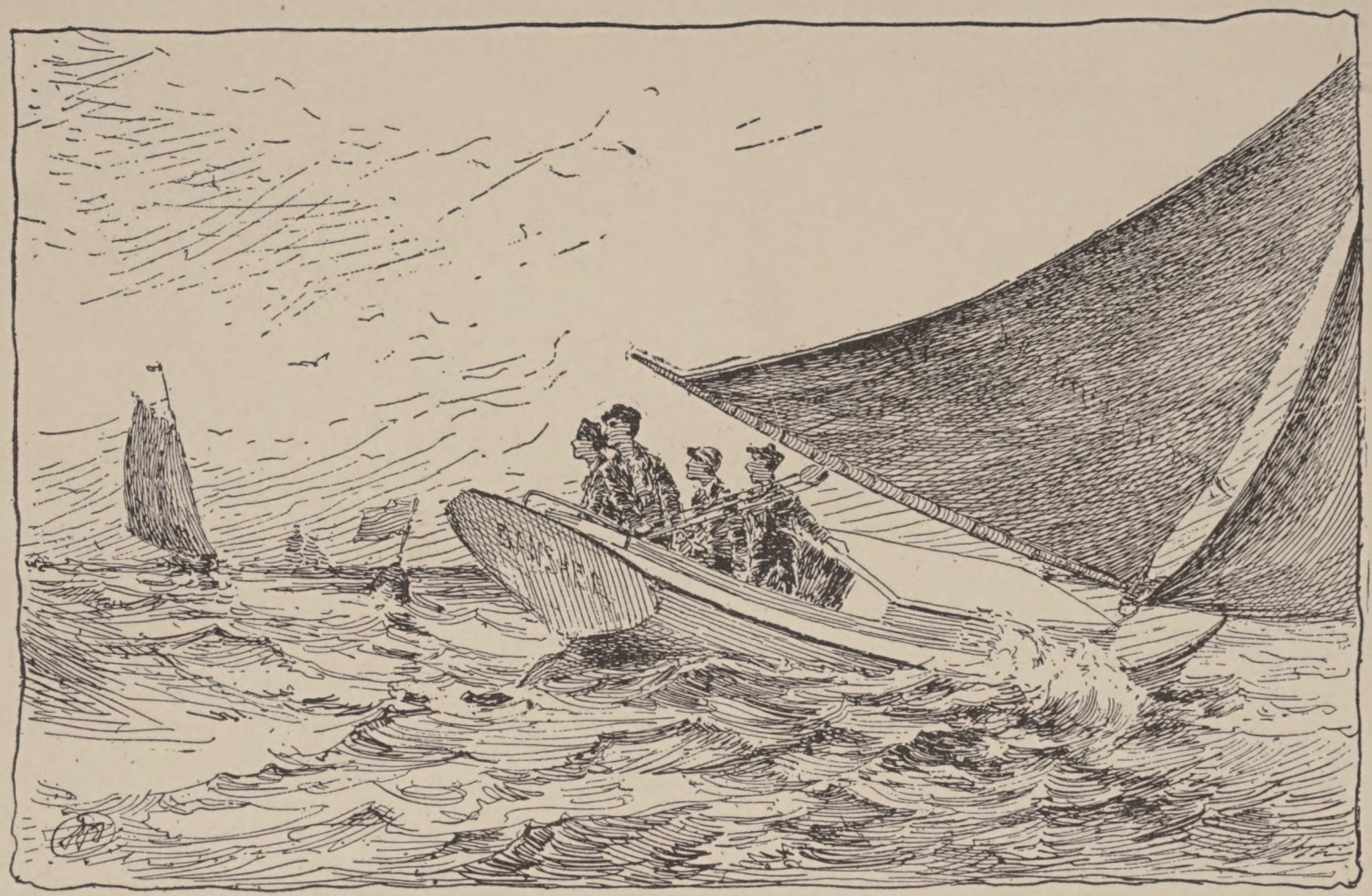
A grim look crept over Fred's face as he watched the Petrel and saw what her helmsman was doing, but he answered Batty calmly, saying, —

"Buoy? He is n't going for the buoy. Unless I am greatly mistaken, he is not pretending to race at all, but is off on another tack altogether."

And then, as if to confirm Fred in what he had said, the Petrel swung around with her stern toward the Banshee, and laid over for Gloucester, while faintly over the intervening water came: —

"Good-by! Catch — racing — only — measly yacht."

"The — the — wretches!" gasped Batty as soon as he could control his tongue.



"GOOD-BY! CATCH — RACING — ONLY — MEASLY YACHT."

"Aren't they mean to skin off in that way and leave us to a 'walkover'?"

"When it comes to being mean, I guess we run them pretty closely," said Birdie with a grin.

"I think it was a shabby trick on the part of the boys to draw out of the race as they did, and it is rather clever in Morton to get even with us in the way he has. What do you think, Fred?"

"I think for one thing that, if he has started for Gloucester, he will get a ducking, if nothing worse, before he gets there. If this breeze gives out, I don't believe we will even make shelter."

And Fred pointed to a heavy black cloud, which had been hidden by the low headlands of Baker's Island, but now came in view as they rounded its eastern point.

"It won't come here; showers seldom do," said Batty cheerfully as the boys eyed the dark, threatening clouds with growing suspicion. "It is only following the Merrimac down the coast."

Now the breeze, which had been fresh, died out and the yacht drifted slowly toward the point. There before the boys spread the clouds, stretching down the coast, surely, but just as surely reaching up over Marblehead.

They could begin to hear low mutterings of thunder, and every few moments the black heap of clouds was lit by a vivid flash of light.

Fred did not feel any actual fear at being on board the yacht, but he knew he would be more protected in the harbor than out in the open bay, and was resolved not to drop anchor, if possible, till round the lee of the point.

Inch by inch the yacht crept on; the mutterings of thunder came nearer and now changed from a mutter into a muffled roar, like the sound of distant artillery, while the flashes of lightning threw a livid glory on the grass of Light Point and Fort Sewell.

Already the long stretch of the Beverly shore was hidden by a gray curtain of rain, when the brave little Banshee drifted round the point, and Fred made haste to get in trim to meet the tempest.

The jib was lowered and stowed, the anchor was flung out and held; the mainsail was dropped half-way, enough being left up to steady the yacht, and all was in readiness. And none too soon, for, almost before Fred could scurry into his oilskins, a cold blast struck the Banshee, laying her over till her deck was even with the sea, and with a roar of thunder and glare of flame the tempest was upon

them, and sea and shore were blotted from sight by the seething, pouring rain.

Clad in his oilskins, Fred crouched under the lee of the sail, keeping an anxious lookout to see if anything parted; the other boys sought shelter in the cabin, leaving the door wide open for air, and so they could see what went on outside.

"Say, boys, we're like the

> Three wise men of Gotham,
> Who went to sea in a bowl.
> If the bowl had been stronger"—

"Don't joke, Batty, when we are in such danger!" exclaimed Neil, who was curled in a heap on a locker, where he could not see the lightning.

"Joke? Who is joking?" retorted Batty in an aggrieved tone. "Besides, we might as well laugh as cry."

Then as no one seemed inclined to talk, he hitched over to the cabin door and looked out.

"Jupiter!" he exclaimed. "Just see it go it along the Beverly shore. I never saw such lightning in my life — never. It angles up, and then it angles sideways, and then it crinkles crankles back

over the same ground, and ends in a wild kind of a splutter."

But just then even Batty's tongue was stilled, for he saw a bolt of fire drop, apparently into Fort Sewell, while the very heavens seemed shattered by the report that followed ; and very much subdued he crawled over to where the boys were crouched and hid his face in his hands.

After what seemed hours to the boys the peals of thunder came at longer intervals, and at a call from Fred they emerged from the cabin to find that the heavy masses of clouds were marching out to sea, and that a few watery rays of sun were trying to struggle through the thin clouds, still hanging in the west.

A brisk little breeze had sprung up after the shower, and taking advantage of it the Banshee was soon at her moorings, where she was boarded by a crowd of boys, eager to know how the yacht had fared during the shower and why she had returned without the Petrel.

When they learned how Morton had turned the tables on the Banshee and her crew, the boys could n't help laughing, although Jack Peyton said to the rest : —

"It's mighty hard on Fred to have to bear the brunt of the joke when it was our fault in not racing. What can we do to Morton? Tell you what, boys, this trying to keep even is a tremendous strain on the intellect, but we Tritons must n't let him have the last shot. I 'll tell you, let 's give him a rousing reception when he comes in to-night; that is, if he doesn't wait till after 'colors.' "

Then with nods and sundry whispered consultations and bursts of laughter, the boys separated to their various yachts to watch for the return of the Petrel.

Shortly after seven o'clock, a small sloop drifted (for a yacht can do nothing but drift, in a light wind, with only a jib for canvas) around Light Point and crept slowly into the harbor, seeming to hug the shore, as if thereby to reach her moorings in her crippled condition without attracting attention.

It was the Petrel, and to reach her moorings she had to pass between most of the small yachts of her enemies, but as they rode at anchor, with sails all furled, they seemed harmless enough.

She passed the first one.

"Ping!" went a small gun, while a mild

"Hurrah!" broke from two or three laughing boys, who appeared as if by magic in her stern.

As on she went past the rest of the yachts, the harbor echoed with rifle shots and with the jubilant shouts of the boys, while booming in on the chorus, as if to put a final touch to the salute, came the sunset gun from the stately Fortuna.

"The Crusher" made sundry and direful threats against the boys at thus "insulting him," as he termed their treating him, threats that were destined never to be carried out, for one week from the night that he so noisily entered Marblehead Harbor, he stood on the deck of the outward bound Cephalonia, under the care of a maternal uncle, with whom he was to do the "grand tour."

So the account of "The Crusher *versus* the Tritons," or the "Tritons *versus* the Crusher," remains unsettled to this day.

AN EASTER ROSE.

BY

EMMA HUNTINGTON NASON.

AN EASTER ROSE.

"ROSAMOND STANLEY, I believe those girls are following us!"

The speaker was one of two pretty, daintily dressed maidens, evidently sisters, who had just crossed the beautiful park which was the pride of their native city, while following closely and persistently behind them, as both had been forced to observe, came two unmistakable children of the street.

With an indignant flush on her fair face Grace Stanley touched her sister's arm, and together they turned from a side entrance of the park into one of the great business thoroughfares of the city. But there was no escape from the calm yet vigilant eyes of their silent pursuers. When Grace and Rosamond paused to glance at the display in some elaborately decorated window, their unwelcome attendants paused also; when the sisters entered a store, these tireless waifs waited patiently until they came out and again fell closely in their rear. When Rosamond wiped her own pretty nose, the

mischievous elf behind her flourished a ragged pocket-handkerchief; when Grace tossed her queenly head in indignation, up went the curly locks of the other girl with an air that would have done credit to any high-bred daughter of New England; and once, on coming from a large establishment in whose various departments the sisters had spent an unusually long time, with the vain hope that their pursuers would pass on without them, Rosamond was nearly convulsed with merriment to find that the taller of the two girls, who might have been thirteen or fourteen years of age, had refolded her old plaid woolen shawl in imitation of her own handsomely fringed mantle, and was now wearing it with an air of elegance which Rosamond herself had not dreamed of presenting.

This, however, was the last drop in the already well-filled bucket.

In despair the two sisters stopped before a florist's window and pretended to be absorbed in the contemplation of a brilliant display of Easter flowers.

Suddenly Rosamond turned from her place near the door and accosted the two girls who had also promptly taken position.

"Did you wish to pass in?" she said with her sweetest smile.

"Not unless you do," was the bland reply.

"But what do you wish of us?" persisted Rosamond.

"Why," said the girl, striking an attitude as nearly like Rosamond's own as a first-class actress could have done, "we don't wish anything! But I am you, and Meg is her — don't you see? Some days we're folks we meet on the street, and some days we're real ladies," she added with a very perceptible touch of sarcasm. "I would n't be her for anything," — here she shot a flash from her saucy eyes at Grace, — "so Meg had to be! I am you! I rather like your style!"

Grace's fair face blazed with righteous indignation; but before either she or Rosamond could reply the attention of the speaker was riveted upon something in the window.

"Goodness!" she said in a suppressed yet perfectly audible tone; "look at that rose, Meg! Would n't granny smile if she could see that?"

Rosamond and her sister were at once ignored, while the two children gazed in rapt admiration upon a rosebush placed in the rear of the window.

It was laden with blossoms, large cream-white blossoms, with softly clinging petals, as pure in color and symmetrical in form as nature and the florist's art could make them.

Suddenly the older girl dropped both her arms straight down at her side and said in a most pathetic way: —

"I wish I 'd never seen it! Come, Meg, let 's go home!"

"Are you very fond of roses?" Rosamond ventured to inquire.

"Don't care anything about 'em myself," replied the girl doggedly; "but my grandmother likes 'em!"

"What is your name, and who is your grandmother?" asked the impulsive Rosamond, whose sympathy was now thoroughly enlisted.

"My name is Tam, and my grandmother is — my grandmother!" was the resentful reply. "Some folks don't have 'em! Meg does n't; she sprung from the gutter, but we are the aristocracy of Glumm Street."

With this Tam folded her arms and looked Rosamond haughtily in the face.

"Oh, come on, Tam!" said Meg.

But Rosamond stood her ground squarely in front of them.

"Tell me your grandmother's name," she said in a tone which appealed in some way to Tam's defiant spirit.

"Well, her name is Tamsen; she was named for me." Then tilting her head in a peculiarly provoking way, and glancing keenly at Rosamond, she added: "I know the kind of a one you are; so now if you 're going to ask me next to come to your sewing-school or anything, I can tell you beforehand I should n't be happy to."

"And you say your grandmother likes roses?" gasped Rosamond, while her own face flushed, for she had at that very moment been thinking of the sewing-school and was vaguely wondering how she could bring the conversation around to this subject. She was therefore almost startled by Tam's emphatic: —

"Yes, ma'am, she does!"

Then a new mood seized Rosamond's strange acquaintance.

"My grandmother had one o' them rosebushes herself once," she said, "only the flowers were yellow. She called 'em tea-roses; and one day

Meg and I steeped the whole lot — leaves, roses, and all — and made tea o' 'em; and when granny found it out she cried. I 'd give my right hand this minute if I could buy that rosebush in there for her."

"Rosamond, do you see who is watching us? I am going home!" And annoyed beyond endurance Grace signaled a horsecar.

Rosamond looked up and saw her cousin Donald, a lad of about her own age, with two young men whom she recognized as classmates of Donald's eldest brother at Harvard.

"Go on, then, Grace," she said hastily; "I 'll take the next car."

Tam had also turned to go away, but Rosamond seized her firmly by the arm. "Tamsen, granddaughter of Tamsen, come into this store with me!"

Tam hung back, but Rosamond unflinchingly dragged her along.

"What is the price of the white rose in the window?" inquired Rosamond of the clerk who stepped forward to wait upon her.

"This? Ah! this is a Madame Bravy, a new and exquisite variety."

"The price?" demanded Rosamond.

"GIVE IT TO THIS CHILD."

"Two dollars and a half."

"Give it to this child!"

But Rosamond took the rosebush and placed it in Tamsen's hands herself. "There, go home and give this, with my compliments, to your grandmother."

Tamsen opened her mouth wider and wider, but seemed unable to articulate a sound.

"But wait one minute!" exclaimed Rosamond by a sudden impulse. "Why won't you come to my sewing-school, Tamsen?"

Then she wished she had not spoken, for tears suddenly filled the girl's gray eyes.

"I would, miss, I would truly, now, but — I hate to sew. Maybe Meg would go," she added. "Yes, Meg, you 'd better; but I can't! I 'm going to be a carpenter!"

"Carpenter?" repeated Rosamond.

"Yes, that 's what I 'm going to be. That 's what my father was, and I 've got his mechanical genius, you know. Anyway, that 's what granny says."

"Tamsen," said Rosamond with sudden inspiration, "did you ever try wood-carving?"

"Wood-carving!" gasped Tamsen. "No, but I 'd like to awfully."

"Listen, then, and I will tell you what I will do," said Rosamond. "If you will come to the chapel on B—— Street to-morrow afternoon and bring Meg and sew an hour, I will take you home with me afterwards and give you a lesson in wood-carving. I have a lovely new set of tools and some beautiful designs. I 'm very fond of carpentering myself."

"It 's a bargain," said Tam with unmistakable sincerity.

All this while Rosamond had been dimly conscious of observers, but she was not to be deterred from her mission, and as she dismissed Tamsen she turned to meet the curious gaze of her cousin Donald and his young friends.

"We are awaiting your gracious recognition," said he with a profound bow, "and beg permission to ride home with you. We also hoped you were going to adopt those specimens which you had on hand when we encountered you."

"Perhaps I may hereafter," replied Rosamond with dignity. "I was much interested in them myself!"

On the following afternoon Rosamond returned from the mission sewing-school accompanied by her

new protégée, who was eager for a sight of the promised carving tools. The self-appointed teacher took her guest upstairs into a room at the end of the hall, where an hour passed full of absorbing delight to the young pupil.

"She is very bright and skilful with her hands," declared Rosamond after Tam's departure. "She must have inherited somebody's mechanical genius, and she will soon be beyond my instruction."

The next morning Grace and Rosamond were busy at work in the same room which had been used as a studio and general manufactory of illuminated cards, booklets, and other dainty gifts, during the few weeks preceding Easter. Various pictures and objects of decorative art in different stages of completion were scattered about the department. In the course of the morning Rosamond had occasion to lift the covering from some recently decorated china upon a table, and reviewed with critical eye the several pieces of a pretty *tête-à-tête* set of antique pattern on which was painted an old-fashioned design consisting of a small pink flower with a stem of leaves which curiously alternated in blue and green.

"I thought this would be such an easy thing to

paint," said Rosamond, gazing at her own handiwork, "but there is a certain effect in these old-fashioned, conventional designs that is very difficult to reproduce. Do you think my set looks like grandma's pitcher? — but where is the pitcher, Grace?"

"The pitcher? I do not know," replied Grace, wholly absorbed in her own work on the easel before her.

"But I put it right here on the table myself."

"Then it must be there, of course," responded Grace.

"But it is n't!" cried Rosamond excitedly. "Mother must have taken it. I 'll go and ask her."

Mrs. Stanley, however, had no knowledge of the missing article; and a thorough search having proved unavailing, Rosamond returned with a perplexed countenance to the studio.

"What do you think can have become of it?" she said as she sank into a chair.

"If you really wish to know what I think," answered Grace, "I shall be obliged to say that I think your protégée from Glumm Street has the pitcher."

"Not Tamsen!" exclaimed Rosamond. "Why, that child is as honest as the daylight. And she did n't even care to look at the china; she was entirely absorbed in her wood-carving."

"But where is it? No one else has been here, and china cream-pitchers do not walk off themselves."

"That is true, alas! But, wherever it is, I know that Tamsen has had nothing to do with it. But I shall walk straight down to Glumm Street this very day. I shall neither eat nor sleep till I can prove that she is innocent." And accordingly, as soon as practicable, our energetic young heroine, with Bridget O'Flanders, a faithful old family servant, for an escort, set out, prepared to penetrate to the heights and depths of Glumm Street. As they approached the number given by Tamsen to Rosamond, however, the heart of the latter began to fail. What if she should find the pitcher after all?

Suddenly the valiant Bridget seized Rosamond by the arm.

"Look, miss," she said, "into that window, quick!"

Rosamond looked, and there, almost within reach of her hand, she beheld the creamy blossoms of the

Bravy rose which she had given to Tam; and by the side of these a handful of scarlet and white carnations in — her own grandmother's china pitcher. There was the same odd, angular handle, and the unmistakable pink flower with its impossible blue and green leaves.

"O Tam!" she moaned.

"Don't, darlin'," said the sympathetic Irishwoman. "She 's not worth a lash from your pretty eyes, much less a teardrop." And with a comforting pat upon the hand Bridget led Rosamond back through the dreary street and left her at the house of her aunt Mary, where by previous invitation she and her sister were to lunch that day.

Rosamond found the family at the table and sat down dejectedly in her place.

"Why, what is the matter? What has happened, Rosamond?" anxiously inquired Mrs. Thornton. "Let me give you a cup of tea, dear."

"I have been on a kind of a Diogenes hunt and had my heart broken," answered Rosamond. Then she told the sad story.

"It is just as I expected," declared Grace. "Mother has treasured that cream-pitcher for years, — it was grandma's, you know, aunt Mary, — the

last piece of the set; and now this wretched Tamsen" —

"Your pardon, Grace," interrupted Don, rising precipitately from the table. "I am the wretch — a wretch of basaltic blackness. But when I hear of injured innocence, when Tamsen, granddaughter of Tamsen, is assailed, then I make confession."

With this the lad darted out into the hall, and speedily returning, laid by Rosamond's plate a package which, on being opened, disclosed to the view of the astonished family the familiar china pitcher.

"Where did you get it?" exclaimed Rosamond. "Did you take it away from Tam?" and tears of bitter disappointment filled her eyes.

"My Rosa-Mundi," asserted Don tragically, "I have not seen Tam since she marched off in triumph with the rosebush, her tartan blanket waving in the breeze."

"Donald," said Mrs. Thornton with a troubled look, "sit down at once and explain this matter."

"Certainly, mother mine. You see I have made a sad mistake. I thought a fault were better half-redressed, if possible, before confessed, instead of *vice versa*. I happened in at aunt Helen's yester-

day afternoon. Ann told me that the young ladies were at home, so I ran up to the studio. To my profound regret, the young ladies were not there, but there was a new picture on the easel. I admired it very much, walking backward all the time to get the effect, you know, when suddenly something hit something, and when I looked around this precious jug lay on the floor with the handle broken short off.

"Of course," continued Don, "my first thought was to alarm the family. Then I concluded that I would steal ignominiously out of the house and take the thing down to Kaufmann's and have it mended. They promised to do it this forenoon, and I was just on my way back with it when I found it was time for lunch. So, between the gnawings of hunger and the pangs of conscience, here I am with the jug. I hope Kaufmann has done a good job," added Don penitently. "The rest of the affair has been a bad enough bungle."

"But how do you account for your mistake, Rosamond?" inquired Mrs. Thornton. "You were so sure that you saw the pitcher in the window.".

"I know that I saw it," asserted Rosamond.

"I have a bright idea," said Don. "Let's all march down to Glumm Street to-morrow and sur-

round the house. Then if the ghost of the pitcher appears again in Tamsen's window, we shall know that her grandmother is a witch. I more than half-believe she is."

This proposal met with unanimous favor; and on the following morning the four cousins, including Donald's older brother John, set out for Glumm Street.

"Now tread softly," said Don as they neared the end of their long walk, "for we are approaching the dreadful place. Tread softly — and look!"

There was a momentary hush. For once in her life Grace Stanley so far forgot herself as to lean back against the walls of a tenement house, although Don at once assured her that it was dangerous to do so.

"Tell me," she exclaimed, "am I in my right mind or not?"

"That is certainly the china pitcher of our common ancestress," declared Don solemnly.

"Don't stare so," said Rosamond. "Someone is looking out of the window. It 's an old lady — a lovely old lady too."

The words were hardly spoken when the door was flung open and Tamsen herself appeared.

"Good morning, Tamsen; we were just coming to see you," said Rosamond.

"Not coming in?" replied Tamsen in a tone which sounded rather inhospitable.

"Why, yes, we hoped you would invite us to do so."

"H'm! Mother's not at home. That's lucky. She would n't see you anyway! Maybe grammy will. You wait, and I'll go and ask her!"

"Under the circumstances, Donald, I think you and I had better walk on a little way," said John.

"Not I," replied the younger brother. "I'm going if anybody does! Was n't I the cause of all Tamsen's wrongs? To be sure she does n't know how foully she has been suspected, but I intend to be present at the disclosure."

John, however, walked briskly down the street, as Tamsen very soon appeared and, inviting her guests to enter, ushered them into the presence of the old lady whose face they had seen at the window, and who rose with dignity, although supporting herself by her cane, as her visitors entered the room.

"Is this the young lady who sent the rosebush?" she asked with not unpleasant directness of speech.

"Yes, and I am very glad if you have enjoyed it," replied Rosamond. Then she presented her sister and cousin.

"Bring the bush, Tamsen, and let the young lady see how the buds have grown."

"May we not look at the carnations also?" asked Don, edging towards the window and heartily despising himself as he did so.

Tamsen gave him a sharp look from her gray eyes.

"Bring the carnations, too, Tamsen," said the grandmother.

"They 're all faded and not fit to show," said Tamsen obstinately.

"Bring them," said the granddame calmly.

There was no appeal from these words. Tamsen took the china pitcher, placed it in her grandmother's lap, and then flounced out of the room.

"Our Tamsen is such a strange child," said the old lady apologetically, "and I cannot tell you, miss, how grateful we are that you have interested her in the sewing-school, and for your still greater kindness in taking her home and showing her about the lovely wood-carving. Tamsen is just wild over it. She does n't like to sew, but wants to be ham-

mering at something all day long. She made this set of shelves out of a big box, and this stool for my feet," added the old lady proudly. "If she had only been a boy, this might amount to something; but I think she had better be doing it now than running wild on the streets when she is out of school. Ah, miss, the greatest trial of our poverty is that we cannot bring up Tamsen as we would like to! Poor people cannot choose their friends, and Tamsen is learning a great many bad ways in spite of all we can do. But we were not always poor as you see us now. We were once comfortably well off, but we lost our little property after we moved to the city. Then my daughter's husband died, and since that time she has been obliged to support us by her daily work in the shops, and times have been very hard with us.

"It was Tamsen," she added, turning to Rosamond, "who bought these carnations with money that she earned herself."

"They're all wilted and not worth looking at now," said Tam, whom curiosity had again forced into the room.

"But the pitcher!" said Rosamond, half-frightened at her own exclamation.

"The pitcher is pretty," said the granddame. "I have had it a great many years and I am very fond of it. It was given to me by an old friend and neighbor up in New Hampshire."

"I beg pardon, but where did you say?" asked Rosamond.

"In Riverdale, New Hampshire, where we once lived and where my daughter was born."

"Why, my grandmother lived in Riverdale too," replied Rosamond, "and she had a pitcher exactly like this, only a size or two smaller."

"Was her name Rosamond Reynolds? I thought so. I knew her when we were children; and we lived side by side in the first years of our married life. She gave me this piece of china for a keep-sake when we moved away. You look like her, and so does the young gentleman. Would you mind kissing me, my dear?"

Rosamond bent and kissed the sweet, old face on lips and brow. Grace came forward, too, and extended her hand very gracefully, while Donald bowed low over that of the old lady and kissed it with a courtly reverence worthy of his grandfather.

In the meantime the older brother had returned, and with what patience he could command was

waiting at the door when Don and the young ladies reappeared upon the street.

"I was just planning a descent upon the house," he said, "to rescue you from the clutches of the witch!"

"Witch!" retorted Don. "We've been paying court to a duchess! You should have seen us! But it was our own grandmother's china pitcher after all!"

. . . . . .

That the friendly calls at Glumm Street did not end with the one recorded above will be readily believed. Mrs. Stanley and Mrs. Thornton distinctly remembered their mother's old friend and neighbor, although they had quite lost trace of her after her removal from Riverdale; and the sincere interest which they manifested in renewing the acquaintance soon found a response even in the proud and embittered heart of Tamsen's mother, who had not borne the humiliations of poverty in a very meek or submissive spirit.

But although the b.tter days which soon came to them were due at .irst to the assistance of Tamsen's new friends, .ne prosperity of the family was afterwards maintained by the talent and industry of

Tamsen herself, who is now earning a comfortable income, not by decorating china, painting in water colors, or Kensington embroidery, — not even by the art of plain sewing, which, we are forced to say, Tamsen never acquired, — but by turning her "mechanical genius" to a practical occupation, which, after a course of judicious instruction secured by the aid of her new friends and some years of diligent labor on her own part, she finds both congenial and remunerative. A visit to what is now known as "Miss McAllister's art rooms" would disclose to anyone the secret of her success. One tastefully furnished apartment is hung with engravings, etchings, photographs, and water colors in frames, often unique in style, or elaborately carved, and all of Tamsen's own manufacture. Fine cabinetwork, and countless odd and attractive articles from a plain wooden bread-tray with its conventional border, to the daintiest of inlaid jewel-caskets, are from time to time exhibited there; all of which find ready sale among those who appreciate a bit of excellent and artistic handwork.

Adjoining this room is a veritable workshop. Here Tamsen has her "carpenter's bench," with its double row of brightly polished tools, her turning

lathe, and other needful machinery and the varied implements of her cunning craft.

Tamsen has brought to her work all the strength of her vigorous youth and the impetus of her youthful enthusiasm. She believes in her calling; her business is a success; her friends are proud of her.

And proudest of all, perhaps, is Rosamond, who delights to show to her guests, in her own well-appointed home, a beautiful and artistic set of furniture made from patterns originally designed for her by her devoted friend Tamsen McAllister.

"This girl, for one," declares Rosamond, "has not missed her vocation."

But Tamsen herself tells us that her success is due to an Easter rose.

THE LITTLE SACHEM.

BY

JANE G. AUSTIN.

THE LITTLE SACHEM.

JACK! Jack, you rogue! where are you idling now, I say! Here, you, Jack! come hither I tell you, and never pretend you don't hear me call. If 't was 'Jack, come to dinner,' I 'll warrant your ears would be pricked up like old Tray's when he hears the trenchers scraped."

The speaker was a stout and rather comely woman about forty years old, who stood with her arms akimbo upon the threshold of one of the seven loghouses which then made up the town of Plymouth, just settled by the Pilgrims of the Mayflower. John Billington and his wife, Helena, with their sons, John and Francis, were among these Pilgrims, although different from most of the others; and Jack, the elder son, was already known as about the most troublesome boy in the colony. It was he who some months before this had nearly blown up the Mayflower and destroyed many lives by playing with his father's powder.

As his mother continued to call, the boy emerged

with a saucy laugh from behind a pile of brush-wood where he had been trying to hide, and said: "Well, then, here I am, mother, what 's your will?"

"I 've as good a will to take the stick and give you a sweet trouncing as ever I had to eat, you young villain, and I 'd do it too, only I 'm so crowded with my work. Here, take this bucket and go down to the spring for water, and don't you stop fetching it till this big butt is full and running over. Do you hear?"

"Why, that 'd be a matter of a hundred buckets or more," grumbled the boy, scratching his head and eying the great hogshead standing beside the door; but, as his mother turned to take down a long hickory rod hanging against the wall, Jack snatched up the bucket and ran down the steep hill behind the house to the spring bubbling out of the ground and running in a bright little stream to join the great town brook, almost a river at this point close to its mouth. The Pilgrim spring and the town brook are still as fresh and bright as they were that sweet summer morning, but the seven loghouses have become a great town, and Jack Billington and his mother would be about three hundred years old

if they still lived upon this earth. Think of it, if you ever stand beside the spring and watch the great brook run sparkling down into the sea!

Jack did not think of this or of much else as he dipped his clumsy bucket into the water, drank a little from the great clamshell lying on a stone beside the spring, and then skipped a flat stone across the brook trying to hit a dead branch that went sailing down the stream. The stone missed the branch, but hitting the opposite bank startled a rabbit which was crouching behind a little shrub on its way to drink at the brook, and laying its ears flat to its back it leaped away toward a thicket where its burrow lay.

"Soho, puss! soho, puss!" bawled Jack, seizing another stone and hurling it after the rabbit, and then setting off at full speed he raced to the ford a little way farther up the stream, splashed through it, missing half the stepping-stones, and up the opposite bank. By this time the rabbit had disappeared, but the thicket remained and Jack never paused for breath until he stood in the midst and began peering around for poor bunny's burrow. Happily it was not to be found, and a great gray squirrel, sitting on the bough of an oak upon the edge of the

coppice and leisurely washing its face with its paws, began chattering derisively at his disappointment.

"Ho! you need n't mock at me!" cried the boy angrily, searching round for a stone to fling at the offender; but before one was found the squirrel, with a few easy springs, had passed from the oak to a beech tree and so on to a birch and a poplar and a spruce, until he was lost to sight and sound. But as Jack stood staring after him, a flash of bright eyes and a whir of noisy pinions almost in his face made him jump a foot off the ground while a plump partridge flew on into the wood with a scream of angry defiance.

"Now, I'll lay a shilling to a farden that I 'll carry you home for my supper, for all you crow so loud," cried Jack, setting out again at top speed to follow the partridge, whose cry could still be heard at a little distance. After the partridge came a woodchuck, and then a pair of red squirrels, and then a fox just seen peeping out of a hole under a great tree-root, and then a swarm of wild bees, who resented Jack's attempt to steal their honey by stinging him on hands and face so sharply that he ran bellowing away as fast and as far as he could get. Then some ripe huckleberries or, as he called

them, whortleberries attracted his notice; and as he was by this time both hungry and thirsty, he greedily devoured as many as he could swallow; and finally lying down under the last bush, and dropping the berries from the stems into his mouth, he fell fast asleep with the hot afternoon sun lying all over him in a very comfortable fashion.

"Where 's that little varlet now?" angrily exclaimed Goodwife Billington as she looked into the water-butt and found it still empty. And as her husband came plodding in from the cornfield to get his dinner, he met his wife tugging a bucket of water up from the spring and scolding so vehemently all the way that by the time she reached her own door she had to set down her bucket and gasp for breath.

"He 'll be home for dinner, I 'll warrant you," said the father carelessly; "won't he, Frank?"

"Mayhap he 's gone to live with the Indians," suggested Francis; "he said he would last time he got the stick."

"I 'll Indian him when he does show his nose, I 'll promise you," remarked the mother as she placed the frugal dinner upon the table and the three sat down.

But supper time and bedtime came and Jack had

not shown either his nose or any other part of him in the village, and before he slept Billington went across the street to the governor's house and told him that they feared the boy was lost, and his mother was screaming fit to raise the roof.

The governor, who knew Helena Billington right well, smiled a little at this statement, but replied not unkindly: —

"Go home, Billington, and bid her cease screaming and get to her prayers. They 'll be of more avail, and by morning light we 'll send Squanto and Tockamahamon into the woods to look for the little lad. I trust no harm has come to him."

"He 's never born to be drowned," replied the father with rather a rueful laugh, and Governor Bradford nodded with a shrewd smile.

But before noon the whole village was stirred by the report that traces had been discovered of Indians in the woods and that it was probable that Jack Billington had been carried away by them. Squanto had gone on to follow the trail while Tockamahamon had returned to the village to bring the news.

"Oh, the murthering savages!" screamed Helena Billington when the Indian was brought to her to

tell all that he knew in her own ears. "They 'll kill and eat my sweet boy, and drink his blood in their horrid heathen fashion."

"Indian no hurt white boy; no eat him; like pig better," replied Tockamahamon, meaning to be very comforting and sympathetic; but, greatly to his surprise, the mourner uttered a scream a good deal like that of an angry cat, and made a spring at his face with all her fingers extended, shrieking: —

"Liken my boy to a pig, will you, you great filthy savage you! I 'll" —

But Tockamahamon did not wait for the end of

the sentence, and slipped outside the door so adroitly that the virago encountered it instead of him, and rapped her own nose so smartly on the edge as to divert her attention from both her anger and her grief.

Before night Squanto returned to the village, bringing with him one of the Manomet Indians, anxious to assure the governor and other authorities among the white men that no harm had been done or intended to the boy, who had, as he declared, been found by some of the Manomet Indians wandering in the woods near their village almost twenty miles from Plymouth, hungry, torn with briars, footsore, and frightened. They had taken him to the village and cared for him to the very best of their ability.

They would certainly have brought him home directly, but the boy himself did not wish to come, declaring that he had rather live with the Indians than with his own people, who made him work, while the boys of the red men had nothing to do but amuse themselves while their mothers and sisters did the work.

"I 'll warrant me that would suit my young man right well!" declared Helena Billington when

Squanto was sent to tell her this part of the story; and her neighbor, Mistress Hopkins, severely replied: —

"'T is your own fault, goodwife, to have brought him up no better."

"And is my pretty babe to be abandoned to the savages without one man stirring to fetch him back?" demanded Helena, putting her arms akimbo and staring impudently at the governor, who stood in the doorway listening to the Indian's story.

"Rest easy, goodwife," replied Bradford kindly although a little coldly; "your son shall be brought home whether he will or no, if his father and you say so. Within this hour a boat shall sail for Cummaquid Harbor."

And in fact before the sun was an hour higher in the clear June sky a stout but clumsy boat, manned by ten men well armed, pushed off from Plymouth Rock, hoisted her sails to the westerly breeze, and after making one tack to clear Beach Point, and another to handsomely round the nose of Farther Manomet, would have laid a straight course for the harbor of Barnstable, known to the Indians as Cummaquid, but for a sudden change in the weather.

The sweet west wind which had wafted the boat so pleasantly out of the harbor suddenly died away into a breathless calm, while a curious reddish and dusky cloud appearing on the southern horizon came sweeping up the heavens with what seemed to some of the mariners a supernatural velocity, while from its lurid depths a hot wind blew in fitful gusts and with a hissing spiteful sound of mingled air and water almost like the snarling of some furious beast of prey.

"'T is a tempest of no common virtue!" exclaimed John Alden as he helped furl the mainsail, and Stephen Hopkins added: —

"Truly the Prince of the Power of the Air is abroad in his might."

"Say rather 't is the Lord Almighty, Brother Hopkins," suggested Governor Bradford in his calm, strong voice; "'and on the wings of mighty winds, came flying all abroad,' as saith the psalmist."

"Look, look! What monster of the deep is yon!" cried Francis Cooke, pointing tremulously to a curious appearance upon the waves, which seemed to be heaping themselves into a pyramid with a foaming revolving crest, while the ominous

cloud above sent down a tongue of fiery blackness which seemed to lick up the creaming crest of the wave below.

"'T is a waterspout!" exclaimed Hopkins, and Peter Browne replied: —

"Aye, and will be the death of every man in this boat unless 't is dealt with speedily."

"If we had one of your guns off the fort, Captain Standish, to send a round shot through the neck of it!" suggested Hopkins, and Myles Standish with a laugh replied: "'Many a little makes a mickle,' says the old proverb, so let every man among us who hath a piece aim at the spout just where sea and sky meet the neck of it, as Hopkins calls it, and when I count three, fire all at once."

"'T is the best plan," assented the governor, picking up his musket and lighting the slowmatch which in due time would set it off.

"Now then! one, *two*, THREE!" counted the captain in a loud voice, and the last word was followed by the almost simultaneous discharge of the ten firearms, their rude recoil rocking the boat until it shipped water over both gunwales.

"Hurrah! the waterspout is broke, thanks be to God!" cried John Alden, the youngest of the

Pilgrims, and Standish, who was fond of the youth, smiled grimly as he said: —

"'T was thy shot that broke it, none else, Jack!"

"Nay, captain, 't was thy snaphanche, more like," replied John modestly, while Hopkins gruffly cried:

"So long as 't is gone, no matter how it went! Make sail on the boat or we shall be swamped lying here in the trough of the sea."

But a furious thunderstorm succeeded the waterspout and so beat and buffeted the Pilgrim boat that had she been less honest of build or sturdy of frame she had surely "laid her bones," as the sailors say, upon the sandy shores of Barnstable Bay.

But God had plenty more work for this brave handful of men to do and brought them safe through this as he had through so many other perils. The storm broke away as suddenly as it had come up, and just after sunset the weary Pilgrims threw over their "killock" a bowshot from the shore of Pemmaquid.

"Too late, and we too tired to do more to-night than thank God for our deliverance, eat our supper, and so to sleep."

"Well spoken, governor," replied Myles Standish as Bradford announced this decision; and two hours

later eight out of the ten men lay sound asleep in the bottom of the great boat, while two kept watch upon the silent shore and ebbing tide.

The next morning all were awake bright and early, and so soon as the boat floated six men were detailed to go ashore under escort of two Indians who had waded off to the boat to invite them to breakfast with their Sachem Iyanough (Yanno).

We cannot stop just here to describe this visit, but simply say that Sachem Yanno informed the governor through Squanto, the interpreter, that Jack Billington entirely refused to return to Plymouth and declared that he would be an Indian whether his parents liked it or not. Being informed by Yanno that he could not refuse to give him up if the white men came after him, Jack had accepted the invitation of a Nauset Indian who happened to be in the village to return with him to his home farther down Cape Cod, just about where the town of Eastham now lies. The two had started soon after Squanto left Manomet for Plymouth and were by this time probably safe at Nauset under the protection of Aspinet, the sachem of that tribe.

"Those Indians bad Indians to white men," remarked Squanto when he had interpreted this

information; "kill many white men and want to kill my white men."

"Oho! are these Nausets the gentry who attacked us at the First Encounter?" asked Myles Standish, pulling his mustache; and Squanto after some explanation assented.

"Come on, then, governor!" exclaimed the soldier; "it is a good enough time to repay some of their compliments. Ten of us well armed and in our own boat are more than a match for a whole tribe of Indians, Nausets or Manomets, or whatever they please to call themselves."

But Governor Bradford was too wise and too good a man to fight for what he wanted if mild measures would obtain it as well. So after a good deal of talk and as sumptuous a dinner as the Indians could provide, the sachem with two of his chief men came aboard the Pilgrim boat and piloted it down the bay until just as daylight and tide deserted them they anchored off Eastham. Yanno and his two men went ashore, and with them went Squanto to deliver the message of the white men to Aspinet and to demand the return of the boy, whether with or without his consent.

"Carry yourself gently, Tisquantum," were the

governor's last orders, "and if fair words will give us what we come for, let them suffice; but should these fail, give Sachem Aspinet to understand that we have hard knocks at command as well."

"'A word and a blow,' as one would say," muttered Standish, and Bradford with his friendly smile replied:—

"Yes, but not the blow first, as you would have it, Myles."

All day long the Pilgrim boat lay, sometimes aground and sometimes afloat, but always surrounded by Indians offering to trade corn or dried venison or birds or clams or fish or wild berries and fruits for any bits of iron or buttons or indeed any kind of manufactured article the pilgrims might be willing to part with. Only two of these Indians were, however, allowed to come aboard, one of them being the owner of some corn the white men had found and carried away formerly and for which they now made ample payment.

It was a slow and tedious day, but at last it wore away, and just at sunset a motley crowd of savages — men, women, children, and dogs — was seen swarming along through the scrubby thickets of evergreen and undergrowth darkly fringing the shore.

"'T is the sachem for sure," remarked Hopkins.

"Yes, and see! He is leading the boy by the hand," added Alden.

"What! That little savage, my Jack!" exclaimed Billington contemptuously.

"Hugh!" grunted Tockamahamon. "Boy no good 'nough to be red man. Have to come back and be white feller."

But Billington did not understand the Indian language, in which the interpreter spoke, and Standish, who did, only laughed, so that Tockamahamon escaped reproof.

The tide was now so high that the boat had been pulled farther in shore, so that as the procession of Indians halted on the sands each could plainly see the other. In the front of all stood Aspinet, the chief, and beside him Jack Billington, his face and hands stained with walnut juice to very nearly the true Indian complexion, and his ordinary clothes exchanged for the blanket, leggings, moccasins, and headgear of an Indian of the first class. In his hand he carried a highly ornamented bow, and on his shoulder a quiver of arrows.

Thus standing upon the shore, with his tribe at his back, Aspinet, the sachem, addressed the white

men in a speech which Squanto, sometimes helped by Tockamahamon, interpreted, while Myles Standish listened critically and found he could understand nearly all of it.

Of course the fine language in which Aspinet excelled lost much of its beauty by this method of rendering, but the meaning remained plain.

The sachem liked the boy, and the boy liked him. They were willing to adopt each other as father and son, and the lad should at once be known as the Little Sachem and in time inherit all the honors and privileges of that position. If it was demanded, Aspinet agreed to give as many beaver skins for the boy as he had fingers and toes, and to promise for himself and his tribe a true and faithful alliance with the white men. Closing his harangue, he muttered a few words of broken English to the boy, who immediately called out loudly: —

"I want to stay here, father, and be a little sachem!"

"You wait till I get hold of you, you young whelp, and I'll sachem you to some purpose!" roared Billington in reply; but the governor laid a hand upon his arm and sternly silenced him with:

"Peace, man! You shall not punish the boy for

honestly telling out what he wishes. See to it rather that his home be made pleasanter for him than an Indian wigwam."

Then addressing the sachem through Squanto, Bradford mildly but very decidedly told him that what he asked was impossible. A white boy must remain with his white parents whether he liked it or not, and Jack Billington, whose father was here in the boat while his mother awaited him at home, must be immediately delivered over to them. He, as governor of the colony, and the father here present both of them thanked Aspinet for the lad's kind entertainment and were ready to make him a present, but the boy must be at once put on board the boat, as the tide was already on the ebb and the Pilgrims must soon set sail.

As this decision reached the ears of Jack Billington, his face, already set to Indian gravity, began to work as if he would like to indulge in a white boy's tears; but the eyes of the sachem were upon him, and he soon smothered the emotion enough to say: —

"I will go now, Aspinet, but I will come back when I am a man."

Then the sachem, unwinding from his own neck

a collar of beads and bits of shell very richly wrought, threw it around the boy's shoulders, and another warrior gave him a shell bracelet, and still another a prettily painted spear, until at the last Aspinet himself took him in his arms and carried him through the shoal water to the boat, while fifty unarmed warriors accompanied him as a guard of honor, and fifty more, with their bows and tomahawks ready for use, kept jealous watch of the white men from their position on the edge of the woods.

And so the richer by a good deal of finery and some experience, Jack Billington went home to Plymouth and for many a day entertained the other boys by stories of his adventures while he was the Little Sachem of the Nausets.

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